

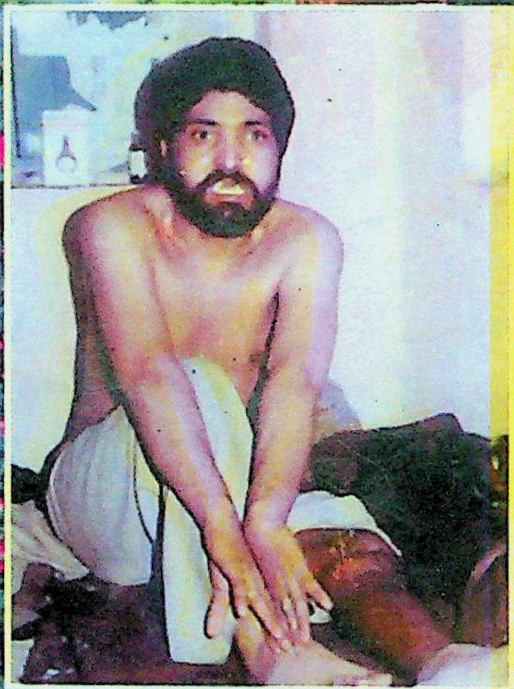
Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

KASHMIR

WAIL OF A VALLEY

ATROCITY AND TERROR

MOHAIN LAL KOUL



Kashmir : Wail of a Valley is the heart rending tale of the people, popularly known as Kashmiri Pandits; the natives of Kashmir who by brutal force were reduced to a minority during a few centuries of Muslim rule.

Despite their immense contributions to all segments of human learning, they were persecuted, and discrimination continued even in post-independence era. The Islamisation of the entire Kashmiri polity brought about by thousands of Madarsas cut at the very roots of Kashmiri ethos of liberalism and humanism. The alien gunculture transformed the paradise into a veritable hell on the earth. Thousands were killed, butchered and tortured. Three lacks of them are in exile and diaspora.

All this has been exposed in **Kashmir : Wail of a Valley**. It is the result of the hard labour of Prof. Mohan Lal Koul who has presented the gruesome tragedy of a minority with irrefutable evidence.

This is the second book of the author, first being **Kashmir Past and Present : unravelling the mystique**, which is now a reference book.

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Kashmir:
Wail of a Valley

Kashmir
Heart of a Valley

Kashmir: Wail of a Valley

M L Kaul

G.M. College of Education
Raipur, Bantalab
Jammu.

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Preface

Kashmir known world over as "a garden of eternal beauty" is now a veritable hell-hole of violence, intimidation and terrorism,. The cult of the gun introduced by the Muslim fundamentalists of indigenous vintage churned out from the *madrasas* and Quarnic schools has devastated the total fabric of Kashmir that had tolerance, cathelocity of outlook and humanism as its dominant weaves.

True to their cult, the fanatic Islamists fed on the fare of destruction, and bigotry wrought havoc not only on temples of learning and widely disseminated infrastructural base for human resource development but also targetted the talented and peace-loving Kashmiri Pandits as a specific ethno-religious group for their externment and subsequent diaspora. Through their noxious and vile propaganda the Islamists rallied the Muslim majority for a religious war on the minority religious group which was charged with betrayal and called upon to justify itself.

While perpetrating murders on this religious minority the Muslim murderers have forged alibis and set themselves up as tin-pot judges. A farrago of canards, half-truths, accusations and distortions was concocted and set afloat against the miniscule minority with the sheer objective of effacing out the acts of foul murder. Crimes of barbrism and vandalism as the intrumentalities of genocide were committed on the members of the target group with a reckless abandon. The crimes were meticulously devised, programmed and executed in cold blood with the objective of scuttling their defences and finishing them off after bludgeoning and wounding them. The number of those

who were mercilessly butchered loses significance but what assumes vital importance is the prior act of selection. The members of the religious group harbouring a non-Islamic faith were singled out from those who are to be preserved, thus eliminating a dissent, a difference with the sole motive of ensuring and preserving a homogenous unity. The annihilation of the Kashmiri Pandit community has been a camouflaged operation conducted by the Islamists convinced of the murderous crimes as the final condition for the emergence of a holy theocratic state for the ghettoised Muslims.

The Kashmiri Pandits are the Tutsis of Rwanda and Jews of Germany. They are in absolute ruins and ashes. Wherever they be, they are a horrendous prospect of pathetic people who are destructed not by plagues but by bigotry and intolerance. The storms of (manipulative have been ignored as non-events which did not happen because they do not suit) history. When massacred in groups, they have been cremated and in some cases buried in all dishonour and ignominy. Their habitations that they had assiduously built up are all in charred remnants. The places of their worship and cultural symbols specifying their faith and spiritual yearnings are in shambles. As victims to cruel forces of pan-Islamism, they are bereft of their territory, their material possessions, their roots and their identity as a distinct historical and cultural group with a background setting of a gargantuan culture and civilisation. A well-defined and co-ordinated aggression was launched against every characteristic of the indigenous group to destroy it and impose on the last out-post of the community in the natural abode the pattern of the oppressor.

As people extirpated from their natural abode, and milieu, the Kashmiri Pandits have been dumped as refuse in camps and one-room tenements with the pre-thought intent of breaking their resistance and facilitating their whole-sale destruction investing it with the veneer of natural death. De-recognising their identities as purposeful and

creative individuals, they have been lumped together under a doomed and dubious label of "migrants" which rubs salt into their bleeding wounds. The callous rulers and their buddies without a goup of shame are at pains to dish out theories to legitimise their expulsion and diaspora with a view to managing the effect of genocide.

And now a word of indebtedness. I feel highly indebted to my colleagues and friends inside academe who have appreciated my efforts to delineate and highlight the genocide of my small community which has been forced to live an ugly life in squalid camps and rented slums.

I am extremely thankful to P.N. Kachru, Onkar Kachru, D.N.Dhar, B.L.Handoo, Prof. M.L.Raina, S.K.Koul, Shyam Koul, Pitambar Singh Bali and C.L. Chrangoo for their assistance and precious suggestions to put the genocide of a distinct ethno-religious community in proper perspective and focus.

I must express my sincere thanks to the bunch of dedicated workers of the Vir Bhawan, Raghunath Pora, Jammu who provided me photographs and biographical sketches of the Kashmiri Pandits who have been tortured and mercilessly killed and butchered. I have to offer special thanks to H.N. Revoo, my school friend and play mate, who has culled lots of material relevant to the devastation that the minority community of Kashmiri Pandits has suffered for its patriotism and positive thought.

My thanks are also due for Ramesh Haku who not only went through the whole manuscript but also prepared a computerised version of it.

I also thank my wife Mrs Mohini Koul who has been prodding me to write about the community that is in ruins and while fleeing from the terror created by the Muslim terrorists she did not care two hoots for the materials stuffed in our home but brought all my notes and jottings that I had made about the developing situation. Those notes and jottings were profusely used in my first book,

Kashmir Past and Present Unravelling the Mystique, which was published in 1996, by sehyog prakashan, a Delhi based cooperative venture in publishing.

Last but not the least I must convey my sincere thanks to the Managing Director, the Gyan Sagar Publications, Dariya Ganj, New Delhi for publishing the book.

20.3.1998 Mohan Lal Koul

Rented slum, a migrant

Jammu.

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Dedicated to the three brilliant academics, Ashok Kumar Raina, M.Sc, Physics Sushil Kumar Bhat M.Sc, Zoology and Ravinder Kabu, M.Sc, Botany who were cruelly massacred on the hills of Jammu by the fundamentalist Muslim assassins chasing the goals of Muslim fundamentalism and Nizam-e-Mustafa.

Foreword by Dr. K.L. CHOWDHARY

*(Professor of Medicine, Government Medical College, Srinagar
and Political Director of the Apex Committee of the Kashmiri
Pandit Organisations)*

There is a plethora of newspaper and pamphlet print about the travails faced by Kashmiri Pandits during the acme of the ongoing militancy in Kashmir and subsequent to their mass exodus in 1989-90 but only a couple of organised attempts to put it down in a book format. A lot of dis-information and canard spinning on the genesis of the exodus has been whipped up by the very people who engineered it, reinforced in no small measure by the militant and secessionist-friendly press and the prevarication and pussilanimity of the state administration and the central government. Many distortions and misrepresentations are still rife as to the causes of the uprising in Kashmir which led to the taking up of sophisticated and lethal weapons of destruction by what were perceived to be docile and peace loving Muslims of the Kashmir about whom it was believed that their worst indulgence in violence was to hurl the Kangris (fire—pot) on the adversary or use one's head to band that of the opponent in the manner of fighting rams locking horns. Even more flagrant defacement of truth is to paint the Kashmiri Pandit as the schemer, the snatcher and the tyrant even while this community with an ample fund of historical and cultural contribution with 5000-year habitation in the valley has been forced repeatedly to abandon its homeland in the face of brutal violence and religious persecution for the past six hundred years.

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It is a historical truth that only eleven families of Pandits survived in the valley after the first major exodus but that was during the despotic rule of Sultan Sikander, the iconoclast, who was driven by extreme religious frenzy to convert, kill or drive away the Hindus. The fact that nearly ninety-nine per cent of the Pandits have now been again driven into exile and remaining remnants are living a life of mental and physical siege is a colossal tragedy and a living shame on humanity because we are talking of the last decade of the 20th century, of secular, democratic Republic of India, of Naya Kashmir conceived on the principles and ideals of equality and liberty and fed on the principles of religious harmony. The present exodus assumes gargantuan proportions because the largest democracy in the world could not rescue a small Hindu minority of Kashmir from ethnic cleansing, genocide and exodus. The greater tragedy of the nation is that we don't find many academicians, historians, votaries of freedom and champions of human rights losing sleep either trying to analyse the causes or grasping the portents of the tragic developments in Kashmir. That Kashmir has turned into alchemist's laboratory for transmuting peace-loving youth into gun-wielding militants cannot be denied. That it can become a role-model for fundamentalist and religious bigots for ethnic cleansing of minorities in other regions of the sub-continent is a warning which we can ill-afford to ignore. That the demon of terrorism and secession if not crushed and defeated will threaten the very survival of India as a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic republic is a bitter truth that Indians will have to grapple with in all seriousness.

A study of tragic history of the Kashmiri Pandits could be one approach in trying to understand some facts of the Kashmir problem. Towards this Mohan Lal Kul's book "*Kashmir—Wail of the Valley*" is a bold and sincere attempt which traces the turbulence right from the times Islam opened its history in Kashmir. The author is well rooted in

history and like all of us has gone through the harrowing experiences of being at the receiving end of a craftily conceived and carefully orchestrated creed of Muslim hegemony thriving on the elimination, deprivation and subjugation of Hindus in the valley of Kashmir leading not only to the invisible exodus from the year 1947 onwards but also to spurts of violence, loot and plunder (like Wanpuh and Luka Bawan in 1986) culminating in ethnic cleansing and mass exodus of 1989-90. A single-minded pursuit in unravelling the contours of a Pan-Islamic crusade with its epi-centre in Pakistan and its clinical laboratory in Kashmir. In the process he exposes the fabrication of lies and canards let loose by Islamic zealots and pulls the veil off secularism from the visages of some terrorist organisations and their apologists, many of whom masquerade as Human Rights champions. He ridicules the fast growing clan of pseudo-secularists in India and compulsive Hindu baiters who denigrate their own religion and distort their own glorious history with all impunity. He does not spare the state administration for conniving with the insurgents nor does he spare the central government for concealing and deriding the forced exodus and down-playing the atrocities perpetrated on the Pandits.

In essence the book of Mr. M.L. Koul is a litany of human rights violations against Pandits and the running theme is that of loot, plunder and persecution. He prepares the ground from the days of Bulbul Shah and Mir Ali Hamadani, the ace proselytizer, to the tyrannical rule of Sultan Sikander, Chaks, Mughals, Afghans *et al* right into the reign of Dogras when the Muslims after a brief interlude in history reorganised themselves against Hindus during the hey-day of freedom movement in the Indian Sub-continent and organised their wrath against them in the loot of 1931. He moves on in the laying process, as he calls it, to the loot of landed properties by the popular government of Sheikh Abdullah (1947) to the loot of a Pandit girl (1967) and the dress rehearsal of ethnic cleansing in the

loot and plunder of 1986. The narrative enters the phase of armed terrorism with intimate details of the massacre of Pandits, their exodus, the loot, the arson and the forcible occupation and annexation of their left-over properties and the desecration and destruction of their religious and cultural signs and symbols.

There is a brief mention of two twilight periods during the rule of Zaina-ul-Abidin and the Dogras in the otherwise dark history of Pandits since the advent of Islam in Kashmir. Mr. Kul debunks the myth of voluntary conversions perpetrated by some historians of his own community. He also has a dig at those who extol the Sufi tradition and claims that it was mainly patterned for proselytization. While we are not aware of forcible conversions in post-independence era in the valley, we cannot discount the subtle moral, psychological and socio-economic pressures on the Pandits generated by the ruthless campaign of hatred and discrimination in all State-owned and private institutions and loudly proclaimed and propagated from the psychology of siege under which a Pandit took birth and grew up but also for some of what looked like voluntary conversions. While I believe all Sufis were not proselytizers, we have the striking example of the sage of Charar-i-Sharief, Nund Rishi. We cannot but agree that the forces of fanaticism and fundamentalism did have a great sway in Kashmir all through the last five decades and always found easy victims in Pandits. We all have faced genie of Muslim bigotry let loose from the corked bottle at one time or the other and I still remember with horror the hail of stones on my car from a rampaging mob of the fateful evening when Zia-ul-Haq met his nemesis in an air-crash back home in Pakistan, as if I was responsible for the accident. All sanity was thrown to the winds during real or imagined provocation to the Muslim sentiments and the non-Muslims found themselves the butt of their ire in violent demonstration against alleged blasphemy in a book titled, *"The Book of Knowledge"*. A foreign tourist once

found himself inadvertently in the eye of the storm of shouting hooligans who forced him to join their slogan, "Ban Book of Knowledge". In absolute frustration he shouted, "Ban All Knowledge".

Mr. Mohan Lal Koul deftly unwinds the conspiracy replete with details and backed up by references to push the Pandits to the wall and throttle his efforts for an honourable survival wherein the ruling elite, the political, the bureaucracy, the judiciary and the religious institutions made a concerted effort where "all the norms were violated and normlessness was stuck to as a norm". This happened right since the popular government induced and implemented the so-called land reforms followed up with the weaning away of Pandits from important positions in administrative governance, denying them educational opportunities and discriminating them in recruitment and promotions. The loot continues even today through a perfidious scheme to buy off the left-over properties of the harried, harassed and left-over Pandits.

The theory of proxy war by Pakistan as the primary event is again being questioned and it is argued that the seeds of violence and hatred were sown right from 1931 and nursed in *madrasas*, *maktabas* and mosques from where it mushroomed into other religious and secular institutions of the land. Pakistan was also waiting in the wings for its chance to throw in support, material, moral and physical. It is a different matter, an aberration to which all violent uprisings are condemned, that like the Frankenstein monster they consume the very architects of violence. That is how the "The tidal wave of Jihad and religious bigotry unleashed by the JKLF flowed at the cesspool of rape, murder, loot and plunder," and after finishing the task of banishing Pandits into exile it barged

into moderate Muslim sections of the valley for whom yesterday's "Mujahids and heroes" became today's tormentors. This phenomenon has received scant attention from Mr. M.L. Koul, as also the phenomenon of militants turned informers, turned pro-India and anti-militant militants or 'renegade militants'. The process of recruiting these 'reformed' militants into the security forces and getting them elected to the State Legislature is a unique experiment the usefulness of which are hard to fathom as yet.

I bow to you my country
that a militant who took up arms against you
and gunned down innocent citizens
looted, arsoned, raped
is today taking the salute
for the Republic Day parade
while his victims
shiver in refugee camps.

Apart from putting the facts in their proper perspective which yet might seem as an eye-opener to a common man as well as the conscientious intellectual in India. This book is bound to kindle the "race memory" of persecution of the Kashmiri Pandits which may to a large extent shape the strategy to re-claim their anestral "Home Land" which they have lost.

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LAYING THE SCENE (Part 1)

Kashmiri Pandits, a euphemism for Kashmiri Hindus, have a harrowing and bone-chilling history of gore and blood, torture and religious persecution, molestation and disquiet. Tragically, much like the harassed and bloodied Jews, they have been harried, despoilt and laid waste and as victims to vile oppression and abominable persecution, they have been fleeing every now and then from their home-land, splendorous and sublime in beauty and natural endowments, where they through ages have built a massive edifice of culture and civilisation with few comparable parallels, to sanctuaries outside the purlieux of Kashmir to save their skin and faith from the hurricane of Muslim zealotry and fanaticism. In fact, as evidenced by historical tomes and records, their unmitigated and unabated saga of trials and tribulations, woes and miseries, death and destruction dates back to dark and dismal times when some proselytisers donning the garb of sufis actually fleeing from the persecution of their native Muslim rulers found refuge and patronage in the region of Kashmir, which was dubiously usurped by some rugged tribals (of foreign vintage) converted to Islam.

Orthodox Islam with the characteristic ingredients of a Semitic religion was ruthlessly introduced in and foisted upon Kashmir, which was proverbially known world over as the bastion of Hindu sciences, religion, philosophy and aesthetics. Rinchin, a pagan from Ladakh, was converted to Islam and Qutub-ud-Din, a Muslim ruler, was coerced into submission by prescriptions, fatwas and commands to

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rid him of un-Islamic and heretical practices, customs and manners and Islamised thus contributed his mite to the transformation campaign against the Hindu dress, culture and language as was unleashed by Mir Ali Hamadani.

1 SAYYID SHARAFU'D-DIN

As is well-known, Sayyid Sharafu'd-Din, popularly known as Bulbul Shah, said to be a Suhrawardi sufi, entered Kashmir during the reign of Suhadev, who granted him full scale freedom to preach and propagate his religious faith and credo. Fed on the fare of broad-mindedness, tolerance and generosity, the Hindu ruler did not think of subjecting him to 'humiliating conditions', which could have inhibited and crippled his movements and religious activities. But, essentially, a proselytiser of Turkish brand, he converted Rinchin, a fugitive tribal prince from Ladakh, to Islam when Dev-Swami, a Shaivite scholar, refused him entry into the fold of Hinduism¹ and through him rose from obscurity to lime-light and saw fruition of his mission for speedy and vigorous propagation of Islam and its precept. Rinchin as the first Muslim ruler generated religious strife and turbulence in the region of Kashmir & resorted to conversions by coercion and by sword. Rinchin not only granted the revenues of certain villages to Bulbul Shah for his maintenance, but also built a Khanqah for him near his palace.² He built the first mosque in Kashmir.

"Bulbul Shah, a Muslim proselytiser under persecution in his native land saw the fruition of his plans while admitting Rinchin to the Islamic fold. Toeing the line of sufis of all hues, he managed entry into and proximity to the court of a Muslim ruler, who would be instrumental in launching upon the persecutionary campaign against the die-hard Hindus, who, despite the preaching of his Islamic tenets, could not be attracted to Islam. At the behest of Bulbul Shah, Rinchin as the first Muslim ruler of Hindu Kashmir

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launched upon the vigorous campaign of converting the Hindus of Kashmir.....",³ writes Koul.

Records Bamzai, "Suffice it to say that with this first success of his mission, Bulbul Shah acquired great influence in the valley and very soon he effected the conversion of Rinchin's brother-in-law and Commander-in-Chief and several others to his creed."⁴

2 MIR ALI HAMADANI'S ROLE AS A PROSELYTISER

A major role for paving the way for launching upon a state-based campaign for proselytisation of the Hindu Kashmir was played by a notable Sayyid, Mir Ali, said to be a Kubravi Sufi, who was a fugitive from Hamadan where Timur enraged by his indulgence in political affairs had swayed his power against the Alawi Sayyids. He cooled his heels in Kashmir, which had come under the rule and hegemony of Muslims. As testified to and buttressed by his extant works, he in essentia can be characterised as a formidable proselytiser and a fundamentalist theologian with a deep streak of interest in affairs mundane.

Capitalising on his position of authority and influence as a Sayyid, he issued fiats to the Muslim ruler, Qutub-ud-Din, to Islamise his state by placing it on the foot-stool of Sharia (Islamic law) and also impose 'twenty humiliating conditions' on the Hindu Kafirs with the express intent of coercing them to get converted to Islam at pain of death. Politically, socially and religiously coercive and awesome, the fiat (in the form of an advice) was an unholy combine of gag-order and lynch-law meant for prompt compliance and implementation by the Muslim ruler, whose temporary dithering and equivocation occasioned by dynastic considerations and ground realities was seriously resented and vigorously opposed by the Sayyid, who having sown the seeds of contradictions, religious fanaticism and polarisation for a social and political rupture quit the scene in absolute anger and despair too.

Records Baharistan-i-Shahi, "Sultan Qutub-ud-Din failed to propagate Islam in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of Amir Sayyid Ali Hamadani and as such the latter found himself reluctant to stay on in Kashmir."⁵

It was on the persistent proddings of Sayyid Ali that the Sultan gave up his participation in Hindu festivals, fairs and ceremonies and forced the Muslims to adopt the same dress that was prevalent and in vogue in Muslim countries with a view to establishing their separate identity from the Hindus, but linking it up with the Muslim 'umma'. The ruler was exhorted to divorce one of the two uterine sisters whom he had married as it was deemed un-Islamic in law and practice.⁶

Over-awed by the Sayyid, the Muslim ruler, Qutub-ud-Din, oriented and regimented into the regime of his religious duties gave in and succumbed to the baptism in matters of dress codes and fundamentals of Islamic law, but somehow pulled his punches from sponsoring an aggressive conversion campaign, which, he felt, might Jeopardise his position and stature as the ruler of a Hindu dominated region. As he was not in haste, his clever strategy was to mark time till the thorough entrenchment of the Muslim rule. But as against him, Sayyid Ali was in post-haste and was for strident and quick measures to dent the bulwark of Hindu culture and civilisation and also harboured a lurking fear that the Hindus, though politically subjugated, might re-group and fortify their ranks to overthrow the Muslim rule, thus defeating his plans for converting Kashmir, a Hindu citadel, for which the Prophet as claimed by him had ordered him to visit Kashmir.⁷

Sultan Qutub-ud-Din, to Sayyid Ali, appeared tolerant and liberal unto the Hindus who as a measure of expediency were permitted to be the government functionaries and being Kafirs were neither hounded out nor persecuted and as such had failed to draw a leaf from his religio-political culture to divide his subjects into the strait-jacket of Muslims and Kafirs⁸ granting them the rights and privi-

leges that flowed from the religions they espoused. Incensed at this, Sayyid Ali's relations with the Muslim ruler suffered a dip and were bitter and rancorous and as a matter of result an internecine 'conflict arose between them because of their differing attitudes about the Hindus'.⁹ As a strong believer in Kufra, he viewed political conquest as a sure means of propagation of religion and its support-base.

As explicated in his two principal works, *Risala-i-Maktubat* and *Zakhiratul-Muluk*, Sayyid Ali's political thought, an anathema to a sufi of real and genuine vintage, appears to cloud his sufi credentials and poses and projects him as a political crusader, who is not only conscious of, but frantically eager to enlist and harness the support of government apparatus to boost and push up the interests of Islam, its precept and precedent. Force and authority as two coercive weapons of the state as he firmly held were not to be spared in the enforcement of religious law.¹⁰ His immediate and persistent efforts to mobilise the Muslim ruler and the instrumentalities of his government for aggressive and forceful propagation of Islam and annihilation of those outside the orbit of Islam, Kafirs in usual Muslim parlance, are sufficient pointers to establish that he was more wedded to the narrow interests of Muslimisation campaign than the domain of Sufism, which, to a lay Indian mind, connotes if it can a broad plexus of values and concerns of humanism transcending myopic religious and political perceptions.

In sharp contrast to the Kashmiri mystics and quietists, ever in spiritual quest, the authorities on sufi trends of thought have observed that the Kubravi sufis much in the line of sufis of various silsilas (orders) were sappers and miners of Islamic crusade and surprisingly enough, were politics-oriented and more than most avidly keen to find a niche in the courts of Sultans and nobles and enjoy positions of power and panoply.

Comments Rafiqi, "Besides occupying positions such as that of Qazi and Shaik'ul Islam, some of them (Sufis) held

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high positions in administration, including that of wazir and they also served as ambassadors. They visited the royal courts, established matrimonial alliances with leading nobles and ruling houses. They dabbled in politics and on many occasions were exiled from the country.”¹¹

TWENTY HUMILIATING CONDITIONS—CHARTER OF ISLAM IN KASHMIR

Mir Ali's Zakhiratul-Muluk containing twenty humiliating conditions couched in unpolished and unsophisticated language is a testament of intolerance, hatred, distrust and hate-campaign against the Hindus of Kashmir.¹² The fiat in the form of an advice reads as under:-

1. The Hindus will not construct any new places of worship or idol temples in the territory under the control of a Muslim ruler.
2. They will not re-construct any existing place of worship or temple that may fall into ruin.
3. They will not prevent Muslim travellers from staying in their places of worship or temples.
4. They will receive any Muslim traveller into their houses and will provide him with hospitality for three days.
5. They will not harbour any spies and will not act as spies themselves.
6. If any of their relations show any inclination to embrace Islam, they shall not prevent him from doing so.
7. They will respect Muslims.
8. If they are holding a meeting and a Muslim happens to come there, he will be received respectfully by them.
9. They will not dress like Muslims.
10. They will not adopt Muslim names.
11. They will not ride a saddled horse.
12. They will not carry swords or bows and arrows.
13. They will not wear rings with diamonds.
14. They will not openly sell or drink intoxicating liquor.
15. They will not abandon their traditional dress so that they may be distinguished from Muslims.

16. They will not openly practise their customs and usages among Muslims.
17. They will not build their houses in the neighbourhood of Muslims.
18. They will not cremate their dead.
19. They will not mourn their dead loudly.
20. They will not buy Muslim slaves.

The advice concludes with the note that if they (Hindus) infringe any of the twenty conditions, they are not to be protected and Muslims may rightfully kill them and appropriate their property as if they were Kafirs (idolators i.e; Hindus) at war.¹³

Observes Rafiqi, "In his *Zakhiratul-Muluk* (Pp 117-18), Saiyid Ali advises a Muslim ruler to impose twenty humiliating conditions on his non-Muslim subjects and in return the non-Muslims are guaranteed nothing 107-9".¹⁴

He further states, "Saiyid Ali reserves every benefit of the state for the Muslims. Unlike al-Mawardi, he does not explicitly mention any rights which non-Muslims could expect in return for obeying the above twenty rules."¹⁵

"Mir Ali Hamadani's *Zakhiratul-Muluk* set a new agenda for the persecution and massacre of the Kashmirian Hindus if they did not succumb to the blind forces of Islam. The book in its contents is highly subversive and set the ground for unleashing an orgy of violence, commotion, disorder and anarchy aimed at corroding and dismantling a social and religious ethos, which had a humanistic base and was high above religious bigotry and myopia,"¹⁶ writes Koul.

The charter of conditions is shocking and stunning and ironically enough framed and conceived by a sufi, whose role in Kashmir on religious grounds has been trumpeted beyond credible limits. As a prelude to the policy of death and destruction against the native Hindus, it, in fact, contained seed ideas of Muslim vintage for re-modelling of the Kashmiri society by forcibly transmuting its religious

complexion and colour by unjust and unkind means, thus causing a yawning hiatus by tearing it away from its historical and socio-cultural moares. The fiats calling for blatant and naked interference by any incognito Muslim traveller (with its extended import to cover all Muslims) legitimised to sponge on Hindu Kafirs and their religious places for goods and services strangely in the name of hospitality were not only coercive and persecutionary, but also reflective of a mind that could be anything but not sufistic in frame and motivations. Despite pretensions of Justice, brotherhood and equality, the charter was manifesting a psyche, narrow, intolerant and more than most highly coercive, and was issued out not as a matter of theoretical assumption, but for practical application and if and when applied, it would flagrantly violate and transgress all decent and civilised principles and modes of a cohesive and harmonious civil life and prognosticate a political, religious and societal structure etched upon pillars of coercion, persecution and inequity.

Brimming with the force and fury of a command, the catalogue of woeful conditions supposed to invoke an instantaneous obedience of a Muslim ruler, if true to his religious grain, was designed to project the Hindus as the 'other,' to finish them politically, socially and religiously, shorn of rights and privileges as they were the exclusive preserve of Muslims in a Muslim state. If reacting to his captive state, any Hindu spartacus flouting any of the medieval conditions, cruel and base, in protest or desperation was fiated to be massacred and his property looted and appropriated (for distribution as booty among the faithfuls). First subjugated and humbled and then stigmatised as Dhimmis, the Hindu Kafirs if granted the status as it was meant for Jews and Christians only (ahli-Kitab) would be reduced to the miserable state of the denizens of a gulag and could be given a semblance of protection, though perpetually vulnerable, only after they paid the hated Jazia (poll-tax) to the Muslim ruler.

TEMPLE DEMOLITIONS and MIR ALI

Temple-breaking as the sordid practice and standard policy of Muslims was given a new pace and direction when the famous temple of Kalishree in the city of Srinagar was desecrated and demolished with absolute vengeance and a mosque constructed at the site on its plinth. The operations against the temple as a precious relic of Kashmiri culture were led by none other than Mir Ali himself. The holy spring inside the temple littered over with the images and idols of gods and goddesses (still intact) was covered with logs and planks, thus hidden from public view, forbidding the people to drink its sparkling waters believed to be efficacious in curing diseases. Even though the temple was dismantled and grabbed, the Kashmiri Hindus never abandoned their claims to and the practice of worshipping the temple from the river side. The mosque as the inaugural of Muslim oppression in Kashmir has been a bone of discord between the Hindus and the Muslims generating many a religious strife. In the Sikh times, Phula Singh trained his guns on the mosque, which escaped demolition and destruction at the intervention of a Hindu.¹⁷

"Mir Ali Hamadani was the author of the iconoclastic chapter of Kashmir history."¹⁸ writes Parimoo.

Records Rafiqi, "It is said that when Saiyid Ali converted the Chief Brahman of Kali-Mandar at Srinagar to Islam and turned the temple into a mosque, he ordered Saiyid Kabir to settle down there and preach the truths of Islam to people."¹⁹

Puts Baharistan-i-Shahi," That some of the time which the holy Amir spent in Kashmir, he lived in a Sarai at Alaudipora. At the site where his Khanqah was built, there existed a temple which was demolished and converted into an estrade on which he offered Namaz five times a day."²⁰

Conversion realised through Force

Mir Ali steeped in his religio-political culture and persuasion could not continue with and stick to the peaceful

propagation of Islam in Kashmir as his successes by way of luring converts to Islam were not significant and encouraging. After a bitter feud with the Muslim ruler, he left Kashmir in absolute anger and appointed Sayyid Kabir at the mosque to preach and propagate the canons of Islam to the people,²¹ but in sheer despair, he shifted to another quarter in Srinagar²² for he was just ignored as a non-entity and people evinced no interest in his preachings and sermons, if at all he were delivering any. There was not a single neo-convert, who had the expertise of calling the faithfuls to prayers. Conversion to an alien religion was considered atrocious. Any convert to Islam was ostracised and held in extreme hate and contempt. Fearing public wrath, a neo-convert had clandestinely fled to Samarqand for refuge and succour. Such was the initial response to the missionary and proselytising activities in Kashmir. It is amazing to learn that Mir Ali in his subsequent visits converted 37000 Hindus to Islam though he had no direct rapport with the people except through the externalities of the religion he harboured.

What was the magic formula that worked in Kashmir, which had a continuous and coherent history of culture and civilisation? Historians discounting and debunking 'the sufi-face of Islam' thesis as a sheer myth have found the answer in cruel, ruthless and indiscriminate use of force, coercion and persecution launched against the Hindus by the proselytisers in tandem with the brutal state power.

Mir Ali as an author

No doubt, a prolific writer, narcissistically in love with his learning and scholarship, Mir Ali thirstily craved for a plume of feathers and immense recognition (normally shunned by a Kashmiri mystic), if not from the heretical world, at least from the Muslim world, for his achievements in the domains of learning and spirituality. But, the fact that he was not accorded recognition almost dismayed him in his commitments and spirits and as an act of self-

satisfaction and rationalisation he nursed a fond hope that a century after his demise the coming generations would recognise him as a man of scholarship and spiritual attainments.²³ That the Muslim world failed to accord him recognition is both curious and intriguing, but very significant.

Comments Rafiqi, "Devoid of originality as they were, his works did not receive the widespread recognition which those of sufi scholars such as Qushairi, Ghazali, Shaikh Shihab-ud-Din Suhrawardi and Ibn'-Arabi obtained."²⁴

Such a telling comment on Mir Ali's works which are mostly tautological and said to be inferior to the doctrine that they claim to demonstrate knocks the bottom out of P.N.K. Bamzai's eulogy woven around his works,²⁵ thus breaking a new ground for an objective assessment of his role-profile in Kashmir.

With Rafiqi's comment as a valuational Judgment, it is perhaps fair and not unreasonable to stipulate that Mir Ali's challenge and thrust in Kashmir could not be based on his tremendous levels of scholarship nor on his extraordinary attainments in the supra-sensible realms. Kashmir *per se* as a formidable seat of learning and spirituality could not have only met his challenge, if he had posed any, but also blunted his edge and reduced him to redundancy had he resorted to the much respectable and scholarly technique of discussions and discourses for an interface of ideas with a view to settling the religio-philosophical disputations and controversies. Kashmir in the past had the rare distinction of having discomfited and convinced Adi Shankaracharya, a philosopher of extra-ordinary faculties, apropos his positions on immensely delicate issues of Advaitism and Shaiva positions on the same and as a result of such an inter-action sharp changes wrought in his postulations got reflected in his 'Saundaryalahiri', a major work of vital importance. But, discussions and discourses, historically speaking, are foreign to Muslims who not only dishonour but crush dissent. While converting the Brah-

min-priest of Kali-temple to Islam, Mir Ali keeping himself out of the ring is said to have prompted and incited his disciple, who in turn resorted to the much-spurned miracle method and sophistry,²⁶ not the technique of discussions and discourses convincing the adversary of his superior religio-philosophical positions and discursive faculties.

There is much of veracity in the statement that most of the sayyids who poured into Kashmir were not devout and genuine sufis²⁷ as they seemed to be this worldly, and curiously took part in politics, which is an unspiritual activity repugnant to a love-affair with God, instigated and indulged in forcible conversions, manipulated and wormed their way to the seats of power, did not spurn comforts and resorted to and set the precedents of ruthless demolition of temples. Some of them were morbidly anti-Shia and raked religious strifes and turbulence of unprecedented scale and dimension. Following their foot-prints, a sufi of local variety with doubtful *bonafides* had political advisers, who established contacts with an emperor to dismantle the shia-led government.

The set of goals and issues they projected and transformed into the hub of their activities were xenophobic, racist, misanthropic and sadistic absolutely alien to and leagues away from the powerful heritage of Kashmir in terms of cultural and civilisational depth of values of tolerance and acceptance and absorption of extreme religious dissent. The ills they sought to fight were imaginary and the cures mainly in the form of conversions were crippling and destructive. A well orchestrated way of life, a tolerant and vibrant faith and well articulated vision of man, world and God became the targets of their proselytising zeal resulting in the decline of a metaphysics-epistemology - ethics continuum sought to be replaced by stray and unrelated constructs to suit a pre-determined and ossified idea, in the death of a creative artist sculpting amazing images of gods and goddesses of Hindu and Buddhist pantheon given the option of carving out grave-stones, un-

Islamic, soul-less and monotonous, in the abandoning of chanting of mantras replete with mystical and esoteric content substituted by dull and meaningless repetition of mere names, in the flight of painters, not reconciling to the dubbing of creative activity as un-Islamic and heretical and refusing to cognise non-figurative dull designs of borrowed variety as real art, in the decay of an ethos, vibrant, assimilative and self-regenerative filling the vacuum by intolerance, dissensions and religious strifes and in the loss of a mother-language, mature and perfect to the core, serving as a vehicle of creativity and philosophical musings and disquisitions replaced by a language nuancing an alien ethos.

In the words of coomaraswamy, "Conversion destroys and if it does not destroy, it is no conversion".

3 P.N.BAZAZ and P.N.BAMZAI AS MYTH-MAKERS

Prem Nath Bazaz known for his Royist commitments and pro-Pakistan politics fabricated a myth that "Lalla held discussions with Shah Hamadan when he came to Kashmir with his followers and learned the philosophy of Islam from that great spiritual teacher."²⁸

P.N. Bamzai committed himself to the same myth when he recorded that "he (Mir Ali) came in contact with the popular Shaiva teacher Lalleshwari and the great sufi saint Sheikh Noor-ud-din and had long discussions with them on spiritual and philosophic subjects."²⁹

Be it said that Lalla's associations with Mir Ali are based on frills of legend and do not have any historical veracity and authenticity. Noor-ud-din's associations with Mir Ali as held by Bamzai are equally fallacious as scholars generally hold that he was born on 10 Zu'l Hijja, 779/9th April, 1378³⁰ and Mir Ali is said to have died in 1385³¹ A.D. So, Sheikh was 7-year old, a toddler, when such discussions and debates are invented to have been held.

The statements, misleading as they are, raise a more important and pertinent question of the language through which discussions and discourses could have been held between Lalla and Mir Ali. As amply evidenced and buttressed by her verse-sayings, Lalla was initiated into the Shaiva scriptures and Shaiva thought by a well-known scholar of Sanskrit, Siddha Sri Kanth, and was, therefore, versed in Sanskrit, which equipped her with the word—hoard for the expression of her intensely-felt mystical

moments even though the medium for them is the local dialect, which Bilhan has named as 'Desh Bhasha'.³² But, Mir Ali proficient in Persian and Arabic could not have established an intimate and direct rapport with the 'mystical lark', who had no discernible achievements, not even a smattering, in the foreign languages, which had not gained much of circulation and currency at that point of time in Kashmir's history. As Muslim apologists, both Bazaz and Bamzai, could have created waves in history or made a splash had they mentioned that Mir Ali conversed in Kashmiri and was versed in Sanskrit and Lalla had mastery over Persian and Arabic or discourses were conducted with the active aid of interpreters.

Both of them could have learnt from the global history of Islam that wherever it has made its thrust, it was not through debates, discourses and polemics, but as per historians through sword and cruel use of force. Debates and discourses as a media for an interface of ideas and thought processes grant a sanctified right to the adversary to vigorously stick to his position and give it a detailed explication. But, Islam in terms of history is a closed religion and 'has closed itself on itself'³³ and therefore does not allow dissent and that was how Mansur fell a martyr to his concept 'I am God', a position in collision with Islamic belief and precept. As held by scholars, Islam in its essentials is a proselytising and centralised religion and any place or province it has set its foot, it has unfolded its roll of history not through thought, but through proselytisation through force and coercion.

A proselytising religion spurns thought and hence debates and polemics are distrusted as exercises in futility. That discourses and debates were held between Lalla and Mir Ali Hamadani as invented by them is actually the sheer projection of their Hindu mind which is open to thought and ideas and lends acceptance and credence even to the view-point of an adversary.

4 LALLESHWARI—A SHINING SYMBOL OF INDIANNESS

Lalla's pristine personality and philosophical beliefs realised through yogic practices are thoroughly reflected in her verse-sayings, which, if clinically scanned, do not in the least reflect the Islamic teachings nor is there any blend of Islam and Shaivism. As correctly appraised by Sir Richard Temple, she was a Shaiva Yogini neatly grounded in Shaiva-yoga practices, a self-recognised soul and a spiritualist of depth and maturity. Scholars keen to find an artificial graft of Islam on Lall's stem of personal cultivation and ultimate flowering catch hold of the verse-saying "Idol is of stone and temple is of stone," not knowing that it is suffused with the Shaivite thought and content, which does not accept adherence to and frankly rejects any conformity to external forms of ritualistic worship based on duality. Idol worship as held by Kashmir Shaivism and also by Tantric enunciations might be useful for an initiate under-taking a spiritual journey for final absorption in the ultimate Reality, but as he goes on ascending step by step from lower planes of consciousness to higher ones, it is abandoned as of no use and utility.

Motivated by their Semitic back-ground, Grierson and Temple baffled by Lall's profundity of thought and intensity of felt experiences were in assiduous search of traces of Islamic influence in her verse-sayings and went into raptures to find the word 'Jin'³⁴ which, to them is Arabic in origin and usage. But, to be sure, the said-word, to their dismay, is sanskritic in origin and semantics denoting one

‘who has conquered his wayward senses’ and Lalla has used it for the Buddha, though it is used for Mahavira also.

Temple with his known Semitic persuasions and Kausambi with all his erudition have indicated and held out a ridiculous thesis that Lalla conceived the idea of ‘one God reality’ from her associations with Muslim saints like Mir Ali Hamadani. But, these scholars, to the surprise of all, are and seem to be totally oblivious of the fact that the Hindus in their congeries of queries and questionings have not only conceived, but reflected a thorough consciousness of the idea and the same gets expressly revealed through the Hindu works on religion. Though polytheistic-vedic hymns are permeated with polytheistic conceptions about the forces of Nature, yet the concept of ‘one reality’ is not absent or missing, but is prominently present and palpably existing. In the upanishads, the idea of ‘one reality’ is the nub of all enquiry, which culminates in the thought-construct of Brahman as the ultimate ground and support of the universe.

Lalla is the essence of Indianness, its luminous and indomitable spirit, its holistic world-view, and its challenge to the forces of hatred and persecution, obliterating its heritage rooted in continuity. Her verse-sayings, thoughtful, intense and esoteric in import, are ‘statements of spiritual experiences, lived and felt, and guides to that experience.’ As the epitome of indigenous ethos, Lalla is all-embracing, coherent and sweeping, never singing songs of despair and woe, despite a blood soaked catastrophe to which she was said to be a witness, but persistently defiant of hate-mongers and violence-perpetrators through her mystical voice, lofty and resonant, proclaiming that ‘equality before God was as much a part of Hinduism as of Islam’³⁵ and monotheism was not what could have sent her into raptures.

Despite defeat and discomfiture of the native Hindus, Lalla personified their unflinching confidence and deep sense of pride in their heritage and roots and provided

them a distinct and unmistakable identity by irrigating the fields of Rishi-ethos with its root systems bedrocked in the Vedic Age only to sharpen the cleavage between a highly tolerant and incredibly eclectic and catholic weltanschauung and a proselytising and heresy hunting creed. She honed and fine-tuned her thought, lived and felt, when Muslims were sharpening their swords. She as a counter crusader held aloft the pennant of humanism at a time when it was under the process of being cruelly bruised and brutally trampled upon and as a prime mover generated a new wave of humanism flowing from the perennial fountain of Indianness, ever flowing and fresh in contents, defying all attempts by full-blown fundamentalist parochials to give it a hiatus and a break. In sharp defiance of what was alien Lalla thought in her own terms, and mused 'productively, not reproductively'.

5 TRIKA PAVED THE WAY FOR ISLAM—ANOTHER MYTH

In his attempt to stipulate a philosophical basis for the spread of Islam in Kashmir, P.N. Bazaz toyed with another idea, astounding and unfounded, that Trika paved the way for Islam in Kashmir.³⁶ How? He has not felt kindly to explain it in details. Ajit Battacharjee in his book 'Kashmir—the wounded Valley' has uncritically and slavishly upheld and adopted the same mish-mash thesis, thus lending legitimacy to the preposterous thesis of 'peaceful conversion' in the valley of Kashmir.

With no firm grounding in the realms of philosophy in general and Kashmir Shaivism in particular, Bazaz commits the fallacy of equating monotheism with the Absolute in the Trika, which, to him and Bamzai too, is the apt nomenclature for Kashmir philosophy of Shaiva non-dualism. It is extremely relevant to point out that monotheism in essence is a syriac concept common to Judaism, Christianity and Islam³⁷ and hence has implicit in it a definite psyche and the syriac-Judaic cultural ring and ambience and contrary to it, the thought of non-dualism, the same as monism, has full-fledged history in India and naturally in Kashmir too. To his lay mind, it appears, though an absurdity, that the concept of Absolute propped upon logically structured thought-constructs led to the acceptance of Islam in Kashmir as 'one God reality' is at the centre of Islamic religion too. Unaware of finer nuances of philosophical structures, he seems to hold that Param Shiva or Shiva as the absolute in Kashmir non-dualism is the same God as Gods in Judaism and Islam are. Shiva is an abso-

lute, not a God and an absolute the same way as Shuniya (Void) and Vignyan (Consciousness) are in the two Buddhist philosophies of Madyamika and Shuniyanvad and Brahman in Sankara's philosophy of Advaitism (non-dualism).

Had Bazaz extended the limits of his misconceived and preposterous thesis, he would have no qualms in formulating that the Indians accepted Islam because of Sankara's philosophy of Advaitism with Brahman as the coping stone of the whole facade. To him, Brahman, perhaps, is the same God as that of Islam.

Monotheism with its Semitic colour and sociological and ethnic background especially syriac and Judaic came over to Islamic realms as a borrowed bequest and if introduced in Kashmir by Muslim proselytisers led by Saiyid Ali Hamadani could not have worked wonders on the thinking plane as it had no halo of being new, original or innovative and more than most there is hardly any region and area of religion or abstract thought which the Hindus have not prolifically conceived and dilated upon with depth and mellowness.

Writes Giri Lal Jain, "There is no human aspiration and experience which lies outside the range of Hinduism."³⁸

Writes Rafiqi, "that the idea had long existed in Hinduism. Even as early as Rig Vedic hymns, we meet the idea of 'one reality'. This also is the teaching of upanishads, that whatever is, is Brahman, it is the source and end of all."³⁹

Monotheistic religion in sharp contrast to polytheism has its full accent on the idea of one God and professes and assumes the execution of His work on earth. Man in such a religion is enunciated as being highly indebted to God for all his material and tangible possessions in the world. As a sequential corollary, man is required and fiated to repose full faith in God and has to be devoted to him in all gratefulness. A monotheistic religion with the accretion of

prophetism is not lost in mystical realms, but is rooted in time and history and looks forward to the end of the world when Justice would be dispensed and meted out. Its interest in the world is not only maximum but supreme as it is God's gift to man.

Puts Krishna Chaitanya, "Polytheism sees the imprint of God's foot-steps in every manifestation of nature, in river and forest, in sun and moon. But, it too frequently degenerates into animism. Monotheism may be a higher concept, but then one God has been too frequently a jealous tribal deity."⁴⁰

Kashmir Shaiva non-dualism having no comparable parallels with Monotheism has an entirely different root system and soil chemistry. It encompasses and is securely modelled on a world-view, which has no meeting-ground with and not even a remote semblance to the monotheistic idea. To monotheistic religions, creation is deistic, but in Kashmir Shaiva Monism, there is no creation, instead there is perpetual manifestation or emanation and Shiva as the absolute reality is both transcendental and immanent. To Monotheistic religions, man is not accountable for all what he does, good or bad, on the earth. He becomes accountable and is subject to judgment only after he goes to the grave.⁴¹

But, as per the Shaiva non-dual tenets, every individual is responsible for his actions, past and present, in this world, which is caught up in the layers and meshes of duality and his prime objective in the world is to recognise himself the same as self realisation, by treading upon the path of piety and spiritualism, of course, under the inspiring guidance of a worthy preceptor (guru).

Man has to march through time and history, but his ultimate state is self-recognition, which is the attainment and actualisation of original Shiva-condition, pure and pristine, a condition beyond time and history. To Kashmir Monism, world is real, yet it in its basics is a duality and

a seeker, who is not an atom in a collective herd, chooses by the exercise of his free will to journey through the zig-zags of duality to a state, which is non-dual untainted by the meshes of time and history. Self-recognition is a condition of perfection, though a state attained in and through the world, yet in essence a state of transcendentalism where a self-recognised soul dwells enjoying the beautiful bliss. He may choose to be in the world for altruistic purposes, but as a man having tasted the bliss of recognition is not stained by his actions in the world. He is in absolute harmony with the world which though apparently external to him is in reality his own reflection or emanation. Liberation though considered to be in the world, but in essence is beyond the world, which means beyond time and history.

Needham, F.Carr, Paul Tillich and Kausambi have offered a thesis for the peculiar Indian tendency to weave and formulate Absolutist philosophies and have found its deep rooted motivations in the Indian belief in time and history. One may not agree to the formulations that they have offered in this regard, but they have certainly spotlighted the Indian belief in time as cyclical or circular, but not linear or straight. The Indian view-point about time, to Needham, is 'that world goes down the destruction one after another'.⁴² Kausambi holds that the belief in four ages of mankind is rooted in the climatic conditions of this land.⁴³

These scholars of eminence also hold that the Indians have yet to make history and that is why they have not produced a single work on history detailing out 'a series of specific events in which men are consciously involved and which they consciously influence.'⁴⁴

Though Kashmir has a scintillating and coherent tradition of history-writing, yet the historians have harboured and nurtured the same notions about time and history and that is why terror, trauma and tragedy the Hindus have suffered with the on-set of Muslims in Kashmir have been

negated and have not been vividly and graphically drawn and delineated. Fate, to them, is a factor that shapes historical forces and processes, which in themselves are pointless and purposeless.

The above formulations delineating the Indian positions on religious and philosophical issues lead one to postulate that Monotheism as a religious idea emerging from tribal social formations contains a view, which is absolutely at variance with an absolutist philosophy. Where Bazaz has artificially perceived a unity of thought and concept are mutually antagonistic and ideologically divergent with no scope for a rendezvous. In fact he has jay-walked into the whole issue.

6 KASHMIR—NOT A TABULA RASA

A victim to his political commitments, P.N. Bazaz has failed to assess and evaluate the depth and dimension of Kashmir's culture and civilisation and its share of contributions as a tributary to the mainstream culture and civilisation of India and with this lacunae in his historical and intellectual constructions he seems to uphold the idea that Mir Ali through his stray visits was filling in a cultural and civilisational vacuum in Kashmir. In sharp contradiction to what he held and expounded, Muslim experience was that Kashmir was not a tabula rasa and 'tabula' refused to be wiped out'.⁴⁵ Despite political hegemony, on cultural plane Islam was a failure in Kashmir as its frontal forces exhibiting extreme forms of bigotry failed to provide an alternate culture-model in sharp contrast to the tremendous indigenous developments. As values are the outcome and product of a long churning that societies undergo during life shaping processes, Mir Ali resorted to cosmetic and artificial changes, but assiduously worked for the involvement of a state-based apparatus burdened with the religious responsibility of spreading the support-base of Islam by forcible conversions. The rest was done by Sayyids parading as sufis posted by him at various centres of Hinduism, who drilled the new-converts into some mechanical codes, tethered them loose from their heritage, taught them the only lessons of believers and non-believers, the blessed and the damned and to cap it all, fed them on the 'narrowness of the spirit',⁴⁶ a hall-mark of Islam and other Semitic religions, thus modelling them into split personalities caught up in the chasm of the rejected past and still-born future.

7 WILLING AND PEACEFUL CONVERSION—A HALF TRUTH

Had the Kashmiri Hindus accepted Islam willingly and peacefully, it would have been a unique example in the history of Islam only to be rivalled by the history of Buddhism. Contrary to the claims of Bamzai and Bazaz, the dark reality remains that the spread of Islam in Kashmir was as blood-soaked and apocalyptic as it was in countries where Islam was introduced by force and coercion and at pain of death. 'Social and religious humanism,'⁴⁷ as projected by Sufi dervishes is a half-truth invented by Bamzai and 'religious humanism'⁴⁸ is a pale repetition of the same half-truth by Bazaz. The sufi dervishes with rare exceptions could not be designated even remotely as humanists as they were deeply steeped in hide-bound Muslim orthodoxy and held fast to viciously sectarian notions and their psyche and each cell of their existence was highly biased and prejudiced and presided over by the idea of 'Kufra' for the extirpation of which they were uncompromising and absolutely ruthless. The first glimpse of their true face and also mind-set was betrayed through the prism of 'twenty humiliating conditions' as enshrined in the 'Zakhiratul-Muluk' which Bamzai and Bazaz were either not aware of or if at all were conversant with them, have conveniently brushed them aside like proverbial ostriches. Having known dark facts and grisly crimes committed in the name of Islam, they have deliberately concealed them or trimmed and tailored them to suit the requirements of so-called secular ideology and Royist thesis.

8 EXTRA-IDEOLOGICAL METHODS

Much against the culture of disinterested and dispassionate historians, Bamzai, Bazaz and their tribe did not scratch and probe deeper to know that willing conversions in societies are a possibility where converts were mentally and intellectually backward and primitive and had registered no significant and worthwhile advances in the realms of culture and civilisation and had proved incapable of evolving a world-view of their own to suit their cultural needs and yearnings or where they conspicuously felt and discernibly realised a proximity to the outlook they were accepting and adopting to graft it on to the tree of their thought. As is widely known that Kashmir as a vital and distinctive strand of the Indian cultural mosaic had a fully spelt-out world-view, a philosophy and a well-founded leviathan of culture and civilisation. Muslim religious tendencies including its Persian variant of prophetic mysticism is at variance with and antithetical to the Indian world-view and failed to register any impact on it. That is why Islam found few ready recruits in India and Kashmir and hence, it had to take a resort to extra-ideological methods of forcible conversions⁴⁹ and whole sale spoliation and destruction of the relics of Kashmir culture and civilisation

9 COMPROMISE AS TACTICS

As evidenced by historical records, the Muslims usurped the seat of power by a *coup d'état* and fully aware of the Hindu personality of Kashmir, they trod the Kashmir soil very warily and cautiously lest they should slip and meet disaster. Sanskrit was allowed as the language in government circles not because it was a continuation of the past legacy, but because it at that locus of Kashmir history could not be replaced by Persian which had yet to register any imprint and headway in the courts of Sultans. Brahmans were tolerated in the rungs of services as a matter of tactics and compromise. The dominating and essential concern of the Muslim rulers at the initial stages was to entrench their rule and also to break the Hindu resistance as the first step towards forcible conversions. Shah Mir encouraged inter-marriages to dent the wall of Hindu resistance and a vital step he undertook was to pattern and model his administration and modes of governance after the system prevalent in Muslim countries. Damaras, fierce and garrulous, as centres of Hindu resistance, were annihilated and Lavanyas and Tantrins as peasant soldiers were disarmed and butchered.

The moment Muslims felt sanguine and sure that a final and decisive war could be waged against the Hindus, it was carried out without dither and tergiversation. To stein, the conversion in Kashmir was gradual⁵⁰ and a matter of slow process but the dismal fact remains that a sudden conversion to Islam with the fury of a crusade was effected by the troika of Mir Mohammad Hamadani, Sultan Sikandar and

Ali Shah through unholy means and cruel strategies. Conversion of large masses of Hindu population to Islam during the latter half of the 14th Century is an accomplished fact for Stein,⁵¹ true but how the conversions were effected and realised did not draw his keen attention and deep concern.

10 SHIHAB-UD-DIN'S ANTI-HINDU MEASURES

A scion of Zain-ul-Abidin's court and noted historian, Jonraj, has sung paens and poems about Shihab-ud-Din as a ruler and conqueror, but in the process has missed his livid and lurid acts of bigotry against the Hindus, whom he subjected to the saga of persecution and torture. The Hindus were barred from going to temples as the bigots as a matter of deliberate design had set afloat a canard that the Hindus were hatching plots to dislodge the Muslims from power. Taking it as sedition, Shihab-ud-Din ordered the loot, plunder and demolition of temples and shrines.

Hasan, a Muslim chronicler, records that at the behest of Shihab-ud-Din, "all the temples in Srinagar and the famous temple of Bijbehara were subjected to a spree of loot and plunder".⁵²

11 SUFI-FACE OF ISLAM' THESIS DEBUNKED

The true face of 'Sufi Islam' got revealed and fairly exposed when Mir Mohammad Hamadani, the son of Mir Ali Hamadani, accompanied by 300 proselytisers entered the purlieux of Kashmir in the times of Sultan Sikandar. His advent in Kashmir proved a water-shed in the history of Kashmir. What he had acquired through the Zakhiratul-Muluk as the prized legacy of his father, he dutifully and without qualms put it into actual praxis and instigated his mentor, Sultan Sikandar, whose soul he had captured, to launch a genocidal war against the Hindu infidels, who, despite tremendous pulls and pressures, had stuck to and continued with their faith and precepts. Following the footprints of Muslim proselytisers, he converted a Hindu to Islam, re-christened him as Malik Saif-ud-Din and married his daughter. He as supported by evidences from Muslim sources had no pretensions and claims to learning and spirituality. Highly motivated and biased, he is said to have signed the death warrant for the Hindus, which was already issued by his father in the form of a fiat cloaked as advice.

Writes Jonraj, "The king (Sultan Sikandar) waited on him (Mir Mohammad) daily, humble as a servant and like a student he daily took lessons from him. He placed Mir Mohammad before him and was attentive like a slave."⁵³

Records Rafiqi, "Both Hindu and Muslim sources are unanimous that Sultan Sikandar introduced Islamic orthodoxy on the advice of Mir Mohammad."⁵⁴

He further writes, "The medieval Muslim sources inform us emphatically that infidelity was extirpated from Kashmir through Mir Mohammad's influence."⁵⁵

Mir Mohammad was categoric and relentless in organising and waging a punitive war on the Hindus as they were condemned as Kafirs and could not be accorded even a semblance of protection as Dhimmis, a status reserved and meant for Christians and Jews only.

In a striking comment, Rafiqi puts, "Mir Mohammad was not ready to give the status of Zhimmis to the Hindus of Kashmir and treated them as Kafirs, who were not obedient to Islam, but were at war with it."⁵⁶

Mir Mohammad Hamadani was perhaps not held in high esteem and respect even by men of his own tribe and was squarely blamed and held responsible by Saiyid Hissari⁵⁷ for the genocide and exodus of the Hindu population. To be fair to Saiyid Hissari, he, despite being ignored by the Sultan, castigated him for his enormous blunder of getting trapped by Mir Mohammad and was unhesitatingly critical of and vociferous against the Sultan for not having paid heed and attention to his advice and suggestions relating religious matters especially the treatment to be meted out to the Hindus in a Muslim state.

In a low key comment, Rafiqi has exposed the personal feud and acrimony between Mir Mohammad Hamadani and Saiyid Hissari. "Mir Mohammad was no match for Saiyid Hissari, in fact, the Mir recognised him as superior to himself when sought a Khilafat-nama from him.... it is not unlikely that Saiyid Hissari did not like the way in which Mir Mohammad and his patron were preaching Islam and his complaint to the Sultan was against the unhealthy influence of the Mir",⁵⁸ writes he.

12 SULTAN SIKANDAR— A CRUEL CRUSADER

Sultan Sikandar and Malik Saif-ud-Din working out the motivational inputs of Mir Mohammad Hamadani waged a cruel crusade against the Hindus to realise their conversion to Islam. It was a sheer holocaust for the Hindus. Declared and projected as Kafirs at war, they were massacred and smothered out mercilessly. Their cultural achievements dotting the length and breadth of Kashmir were put to a ruthless and whole-sale ravage and destruction. Sultan Sikandar committed unpardonable crimes, brutal and horrendous, against Hindus, shaming the cruellest of the cruel. Hindus were held out three options, either to get converted to Islam or flee their land of genesis or face perishment.⁵⁹ As an outcome of this brutal government decree, thousands of Hindus buckled under pressure and accepted Islam, thousands fled the land and thousands accepted death as an alternative to conversion.

Winning the sobriquet of 'but-shikan'-idol -breaker, Sultan Sikandar as a Muslim vandal desecrated, ravaged and smashed into smithereens numerous temples, caityas, viharas, shrines, hermitages and other holy places of the Hindus and Buddhists. As a boor, he banned dance, drama, music and iconography as aesthetic activities of the Hindus and fiated them as heretical and un-Islamic. He forbade the Hindus to apply a tilak mark on their fore-heads.⁶⁰ He did not permit them to pray and worship, blow a conch and toll a bell.

He stopped them from cremating their dead.⁶¹ A Hindu mother giving birth to twins was exacted. Infamous Jazia (poll-tax)⁶² equal to 4 tolas of silver was imposed on the Hindus in the same manner as Muslims imposed 'blood-tax' on the Bulgarians. The Hindus were first cruelly butchered and then their sacred threads were collected and put to flames.⁶³ They were detained and then hurled into the waters of the Dal Lake and that particular quarter of the lake is still known as 'Bata Mazar', grave-yard of Hindus.

A despicable war was waged on books enshrining Hindu contributions to and achievements in the variegated segments of human knowledge and learning.⁶⁴ Patrol guards were posted on all exit-points lest the Hindus should escape the fury with their bodies and faith intact.⁶⁵ Army was harnessed and pressed into service to convert the Hindus.⁶⁶ The Hindus were deprived of the means of livelihood so as to coerce them to accept Islam. They were fiated not to put their learners to any type of schools. Celebration of Hindu fairs and festivals was banned. Islamic law was imposed on the Hindus.

Records Baharistan-i-Shahi, "Immediately after his (Mir Mohammad's) arrival, Sultan Sikandar, peace be on him, submitted to his supremacy and proved his loyalty to him by translating his words into deeds. He eradicated aberrant practices and infidelity. He also put an end to the various forbidden and unlawful practices throughout his kingdom. Thus during the entire period of his rule, all traces of wines and intoxicants and instruments of vice and corruption, like the cord of canticle, lyre and tamborin were wiped out. The clamour of the drum and the trumpet, the shrill notes of the fife and the clarion no longer reached people's ears, except in battles and assaults."⁶⁷

"Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam and were massacred in case they refused to be converted",⁶⁸ writes Hasan, a Muslim chronicler. He further observes, "And Sikandarpura (a city laid out by Sultan Sikandar) was laid out on the debris of the destroyed temples of the Hindus.

In the neighbourhood of the royal palaces in Sikandarpora, the Sultan destroyed the temples of Maha-Shri built by Praversena and another by Tarapida. The material from these was used for constructing a 'Jami' mosque in the middle of the city."⁶⁹

"Towards the fag end of his life, he (Sultan Sikandar) was infused with a zeal for demolishing idol-houses, destroying the temples and idols of the infidels. He destroyed the massive temple at Beejbehara. He had designs to destroy all the temples and put an end to the entire community of infidels,"⁷⁰ puts Bharistan-i-Shahi.

In his second Rajtarangini, the historian Jonraj has recorded, "There was no city, no town, no village, no wood, where the temples of the gods were unbroken. When Sureshavari, varaha and others were broken, the world trembled, but not so the mind of the wicked king. He forgot his kingly duties and took delight day and night in breaking images."⁷¹

Writes Ajit Bhattacharjee, "Sikandar (1389-1413) equalled the most blood-thirsty and iconoclastic Muslim conquerors anywhere in his zeal to obliterate all traces of the Hindu religion and convert its followers to Islam on pain of death. Temples were levelled and some of the grandest monuments of old damaged and disfigured.....thousands of Hindus escaped across the borders of Kashmir, others were massacred."⁷²

He further records, "Hindu temples were felled to the ground and for one year a large establishment was maintained for the demolition of the grand Martand temple. But when the massive masonry resisted all efforts, fire was applied and the noble buildings cruelly defaced."⁷³

According to M.Mujeeb, Sikandar, the iconoclast of Kashmir, made forcible conversions a sustained political policy.⁷⁴

To quote Firishta, "Many of the Brahmans rather than abandon their religion or their country poisoned them-

selves, some emigrated from their homes while a few escaped the evil of banishment by becoming Mohamadans.”⁷⁵

Puts A.K. Mujumdar, “These Muslim immigrants (so called sufis) brought with them that fanatic iconoclastic zeal which distinguished Islam in other parts of India, but from which Kashmir was happily free upto this time.”⁷⁶

He further records, “Sikandar’s reign was disgraced by a series of acts, inspired by religious bigotry and iconoclastic zeal for which there is hardly any parallel in the annals of the Muslim rulers of India.”⁷⁷

13 MIR ALI HAMDANI'S ADVICE TO SULTAN SIKANDARA—AN ATROCIOUS FALSEHOOD

As a bare fact of history, it is not unknown that Mir Mohammad Hamadani as a formidable proselytiser was squarely responsible for the blatant use of force and sword against the Hindu masses of Kashmir. The pages of history are teeming with the brutalities and savageries inflicted on them only to coerce them to accept Islam. Sultan Sikandar proved their great tormentor and the Hindus ran helter and skelter to safer zones and as per the living memory of Kashmiri Pandits only eleven families stayed back and rest of them were either brutally massacred or converted to Islam. Mir Mohammad not only instigated Sultan Sikandar for the war waged against the Hindus, but is also said to have quoted scriptures that the Hindu Kafirs were enemies of Islam and could not be granted protection as *Zhimmis* and yet, to *Bamzai*, he is a sufi saint, who looked upon the policy of his mentor with disfavour and disapproval.⁷⁸

In his zeal for being a Muslim apologist, he goes on to add that "Mir Ali Hamadani, the great sufi Sayyid, would not look with equanimity on this show of brute force against the Brahmans (Hindus of Kashmir) and advised Sultan Sikandar to desist from this un-Islamic practice. The Brahmans were allowed to pursue their religion and occupation on payment of poll-tax or *Jaziya*."⁷⁹

Be it said that what Bamzai has recorded is a sheer distortion of and violence on facts of history. Mir Ali Hamadani as per authentic records had died in 1385 A.D. and was laid to rest at Khatlan and according to Bamzai, Sultan Sikandar came to the throne of Kashmir exactly in 1389 A.D., that is four years after Mir Ali's demise. As per hard facts, Mir Mohammad arrived in Kashmir in 796/1393 and soon after Sultan Sikandar was regimented into bigotry and embarked upon the extirpation of infidelity from the belts of Kashmir. How Sultan Sikandar was asked and advised to stop his genocidal war against the Hindus after Mir Ali's demise by Mir Ali himself is understandable to Bamzai alone.

14 RETURN OF SANITY

Sultan Zain-ul-abidin authored a new chapter of tolerance, mutual good-will and co-existence in the history of Kashmir. He allowed peace and respite to the harried, harassed and bloodied Hindus, whom he called back to their land of genesis wherefrom they had fled in fear and terror to the mountainous regions and plains of India. He permitted them to pursue their religious and aesthetic activities and pursuits much to the chagrin of the Muslim bigots, who opposed him tooth and nail for calling back Hindus and rehabilitating them and allowing them to acquire and pursue knowledge and also to earn their living without subjecting them to crippling discrimination on religious grounds. To the Muslim fanatics, the Sultan was a heretic as he exempted the Hindus from Jaziya and permitted them to celebrate their fairs and festivals and cremate their dead.

Records Baharistan-i-Shahi, "Whereas the Sultan showed considerable favour and regard to the Muslim nobles and learned men, he also undertook the re-construction of the monuments of the infidels and communities of poly-theists. He popularised the practices of the infidels and the heretics and the customs of idol-worshippers and the people ignorant of faith. All those temples and idol-houses of the infidels which had been destroyed totally in the reign of Sultan Sikandar, may God bless his soul, were re-built and rehabilitated by him. Most of the unbelievers and polytheists, who had fled to the lands of Jammu and Kishtwar because of the overwhelming strength of Islam, were in-

duced by him to return to Kashmir. The sacred books of the infidels and the writings of the polytheists which had been taken out of this country were brought back and thus the learning of the unbelievers and the customs of the polytheists were revived by him. He helped the community of the misled idolators to prosper. In every village and town, blasphemous customs connected with springs or temples were revived. He ordered that in every town and locality celebration of special feasts and festivals by infidels be revived in accordance with the customs prevalent in the past.⁸⁰

It further records,"The only conspicuous defect and an over-all drawback of Zain-ul-abidin was that idolatory and heresy, which had been stamped out in the reign of Sultan Sikandar, the iconoclast, and of which there had remained no traces in the land of Kashmir were revived by him. The customs and practices of the polytheists and the heretics received fresh impetus and were given renewed currency. He ordered that particular days of festivity to be celebrated in every town and village in which innumerable vices and corrupt practices were let loose. In more than one way, these had a deleterious influence on the sharia and Islam brought by the Prophet. The community of the infidels and heretics called him the great king because they flourished under his rule and he was known by the name throughout his kingdom.....-It resulted in the gradual weakening of Islam and decay of its canons and postulates, idol worship and corrupt and immoral practices thrived."⁸¹

15 NA BHATTO AHAM— A CRY IN AGONY

In the wake of Zain-ul-Abdin's death, Kashmir was again hurled into the vortex of chaos, disorder and unprecedented religious bigotry. Haider Shah (1470-72) lecherous and a rake, given to the company of ravishing damsels and bouts of drinking proved wild and ferocious for the Hindus of Kashmir. Not only that he harassed and persecuted them, but also killed them with all vengeance. Revolting against the policy of liquidating them, the Hindus in sheer anger and desperation mobbed most of the mosques built on the temple plinths with temple materials and set them afire. The Sayyid Ali mosque constructed on the plinth of a ravaged and spoliated temple was the main target and was burnt to cinders. This incident when broached to the Sultan touched his raw nerve and not taking it lying down, he issued an atrocious decree of chopping off the noses, ears and arms of the Hindus through the length and breadth of Kashmir.

Consequent upon it, the Hindus were swooped and caught and subjected to the vile and bloody orgy of flenching the body parts and limbs. Dragging Hindus out from their houses, a brutality in itself, many of them were sawed and chopped into two halves, an atrocity unknown to ferocious savages. Terrorised beyond limits, they flinched and wilted, fell and faltered and in pain and agony yelled out their lungs "Na Bhatto Aham" (I am not a Bhatta, a Kashmiri Hindu) only to avoid the bloody orgy of mutilation of body parts.

16 CRUSADE RE-LAUNCHED— SHAMS-UD-DIN IRAQI

The chaks, rough and rugged, owing their descent to Dardistan, added new chapters to the history of gore and blood that was being wantonly written in Kashmir. It was during their rule and hegemony that the Kashmiri Hindus, who, having survived the first wave of fury unleashed by Sultan Sikandar, were again hurled into the orgy of flashing swords and savage brutalities, thus terminating their short spell of honeymoon with peace and respite during the reign of Zain-ul-abidin. During chak period of Kashmir history, Muslim bigotry and intolerance touched a new crescendo and Hindus were brutalised, tortured and killed on an unprecedented scale.

Shams-ud-Din Iraqi, a frightful crusader from Talish on the shores of caspian sea, had two stints in Kashmir, one in the times of Sultan Hasan Shah and the other during the reign of Mohammad Shah. His stay in Kashmir was highly controversial as he clandestinely propagated the canons and credos of Shia Sect of Islam, which the Sunni Muslims bitterly resented and opposed, thus setting the ground and pace for Shia-Sunni strifes and feuds. Shams Iraqi's mission and role in Kashmir was the same stamping out and extirpation of infidelity and he in his conversionery campaigns was extended all manner of support and succour by the governments led by Musa Raina and Kaji Chak, who as principal converts to his faith executed his fiats and played a second fiddle to him. Musa Raina gave gardens, orchards, ornaments, costumes, horses, jewellery and gold

to Shams Iraqi, who utilised the wealth, they say, for the construction of a Khanqah at Zadibal on the outskirts of Srinagar.⁸² The chiselled stones and other materials from ravaged temples are said to have been utilised in the construction of the Khanqah.

Kashmiri Hindus had already tasted the bitter fury of a crusade, but Shams Iraqi lent it a new ferocity of pace and momentum and as an outcome history was repeated for the Hindus, who were tortured, persecuted and killed to bring them to the fold of Shia-faith of Islam. Temples out of morbid intolerance were again pillaged and destroyed and mosques built at their sites. The Hindus were terrorised and converted at the point of sword. "Twenty-four thousand Hindu families were converted at one stroke to the faith of Islam by force and compulsion (qahran and gabran),"⁸³ records Hasan. The lands belonging to the Brahmans from ages were suddenly confiscated and as a measure of coercion men associated with the maintenance and up-keep of temples were detained and arrested to break their allegiance to the Hindu places of worship.⁸⁴ In the role of a model vandaliser Shams Iraqi vengefully plundered and destroyed the Vishnu temple, a marvel of Hindu architecture, at Buniyar in the district of Baramulla. He lavished personal care and attention in getting all the temples of Srinagar city looted, plundered and destroyed.

"As many as eighteen big temples in the city of Srinagar and in the rural areas of the valley were completely destroyed under the instructions and orders of Shams-ud-Din Iraqi and MaliK Musa Raina,"⁸⁵ records Tohfatul Ahbab.

"At the behest of Shams Iraqi, Musa Raina had ordered 1500 to 2000 infidels to be brought to his door-steps every day by his followers. They would remove their sacred threads, administer Kalima to them, circumcise them and thrust lumps of beef into their mouths,"⁸⁶ mentions Tohfatul Ahbab.

Musa Raina, Prime Minister of Mohammad Shah, proved a scourge for the Hindus. His bigotry and ani-

Hindu animus and venom got reflected when his government raised and organised a brigade of ferocious and hardened criminals and notorious scoundrels under the command of a chak brute, who looted and killed Hindu families, destroyed and ravaged Hindu temples and pulled down Hindu schools and Hindu institutions of learning.⁸⁷

Records Bharistan-i-Shahi,"During the government of Malik Musa Raina, all the depraved heretics of this land had been converted to Islam."⁸⁸

It also records, "He (Zain-ul-abidin) had permitted idolators and polytheists to revive the practices of infidelity and they had propagated heresy (kufr) and false religion (Din-i-batil), with the support of some more kings, the infidels had flourished day after day. But, with the support and authority of Malik Musa Raina, Amir Shams-ud-Din Mohammad under-took a wholesale destruction of all those idol-houses as well as the ruination of the very foundation of infidelity and dis-belief. On the site of every idol-house he destroyed he ordered the construction of a mosque for offering prayers after the Islamic manner. The idolatory and heresy which had existed prior to his coming were effectively replaced by his preaching and propagation of Islam, its laws and practices. He brought honour to all the infidels and heretics (Zandiqa) of Kashmir by admitting them to the Islamic faith and bestowed upon them many kinds of rewards and benefactions. It is publicly known that during his life time, with the virtuous efforts and elaborate arrangements made by the fortunate Malik Musa Raina, twenty four thousand families of staunch infidels and stubborn heretics were ennobled by being converted to Islam."⁸⁹ .

17 NIRMAL KANTH—A PILLAR OF RESISTANCE

Shams-Iraqi had to quit Kashmir amidst bitter opposition and stormy protests from the Sunni Muslims, who had not taken kindly to and savoured well his religious activities related to the proliferation of support-base of Shia-sect of Islam. With the decline of Musa Raina, he lost patronage and protective shield from his government and had no option but to buzz off Kashmir in utter haste and confusion. In the wake of his departure, a daring Pandit, Nirmal Kanth, defying oppression and opposition, launched upon a campaign to re-convert the Hindus who had succumbed to the sword of Islam. His successes in his unique venture of reclaiming the lost were enormous and baffling, but also fraught with perils for him, the re-converts and original Hindus. Amidst the tycoon of Muslim bigotry, Nirmal Kanth, became a rallying point for the Pandits who were eager to organise themselves and weld their ranks to seek protection of their faith and limb from the biased Muslim ruler. After hectic and prolonged confabulations, he drafted a mild petition and submitted it to the Sultan, who was incompetent and apathetic to the affairs of the state except to enjoy his position of pelf and panoply. In fact, *defacto* power was vested in and wielded by the feuding Shia nobles, their proteges and ignoble government officers.

The internecine and bitter struggle for power between Musa Raina and Kaji Chak finally culminated in the elimination of Musa Raina. Seizing the reins of government

Kaji Chek was in a tearing haste to harness its instrumentalities to perpetrate death and destruction on the Hindus. Shams Iraqi was in doldrums in Khurasan where the Sultan, Hussian Mirza, had developed deep suspicions about his political and religious activities and had ordered his immediate expulsion from the country.⁹⁰ With the active aid and support of his previous contacts, he managed to stage a come-back into Kashmir after a period of twelve years. Kaji Chak came under the umbrella of his influence and ideology and eight hundred prominent Hindus especially the re-converts including Nirmal Kanth were gruesomely massacred as they were given the bad name of apostates, who had betrayed and defied Islam and had practised idolatry by placing their haunches on the divine book.

Records Baharistan-i-Shahi, "With the help of some of the chiefs of this land, some of them had reverted to the customs of the infidels and polytheists. These apostates had resumed idolatry. Some of the infidels related that during the hours of offering prayers and worshipping of idols, they would place a copy of the Quran under their haunches to make a seat to sit upon. Thus idol-worshipping proceeded even when they sat on the divine book. When the news and details of these doings were brought to Amir Shamsud-Din Iraqi he summoned Malik Kaji Chak to him. Accompanied by Malik Ali and Khwaja Ahmed, his two counsellors and administrators, Malik Kaji Chak presented himself before the venerable Amir, who declared to them.

'This community of idolators has after embracing and submitting to the Islamic faith, now gone back to defiance and apostasy. If you find yourself unable to inflict punishment upon them in accordance with the provisions of Sharia and take disciplinary action against them, it will become necessary and incumbent upon me to proceed on

self-imposed exile and in that case you shall not stand in my way at the time of my departure.”⁹¹

It further adds, “Kaji Chak consulted his counsellors and administrative officers and decided upon carrying out a whole-sale massacre of the infidels. Their massacre was scheduled for the days of the approaching ‘Ashura’. Thus seven to eight hundred infidels were put to death.”⁹²

Baharistan-i-Shahi also describes, “Those killed were the leading personalities of the community of infidels at that time, men of substance and government functionaries. Each of them wielded influence and sway over a hundred families of other infidels and heretics. Thus the entire community of infidels and polytheists in Kashmir was coerced into conversion to Islam at the point of sword. This is one of the major achievements of Malik Kaji Chak.”⁹³

As models of brutal intolerance and tyranny the chaks re-imposed Jazia (poll tax) on the Hindus, who were exempted from paying it during the benevolent rule of Sultan Zain-ul-abidin. They had in all vengefulness ordered to kill one thousand cows every day with a view to injuring and offending the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus. To coerce them to join the Islamic fold, the Hindus were blatantly discriminated and deprived of the opportunities of earning their livelihood and thus stark deprivation and poverty stared them in the face.



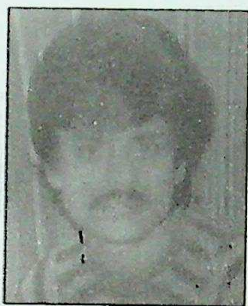
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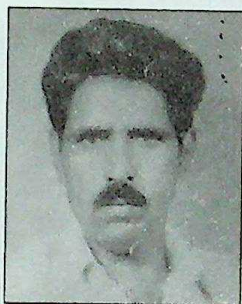
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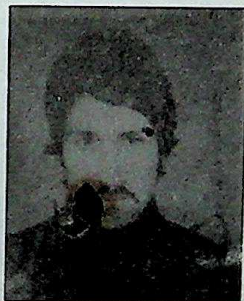
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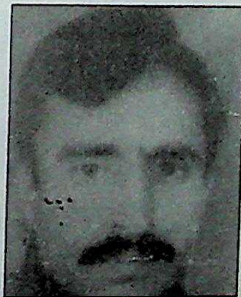
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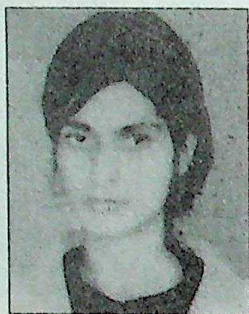
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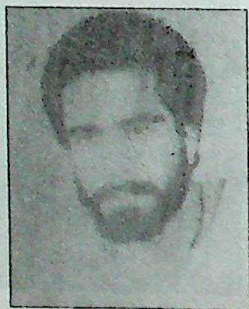
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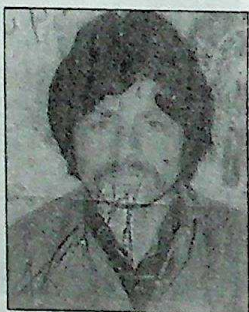
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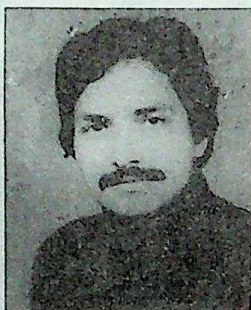
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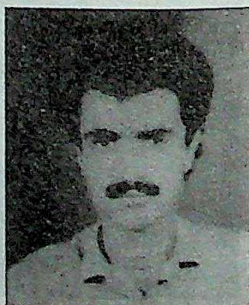
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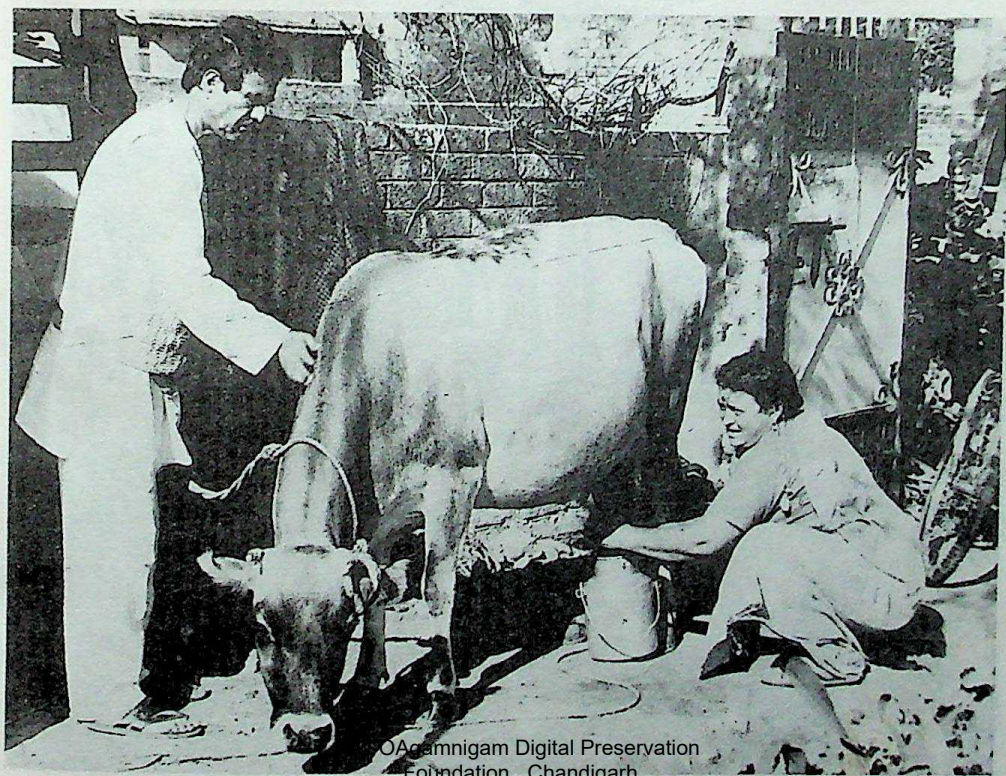


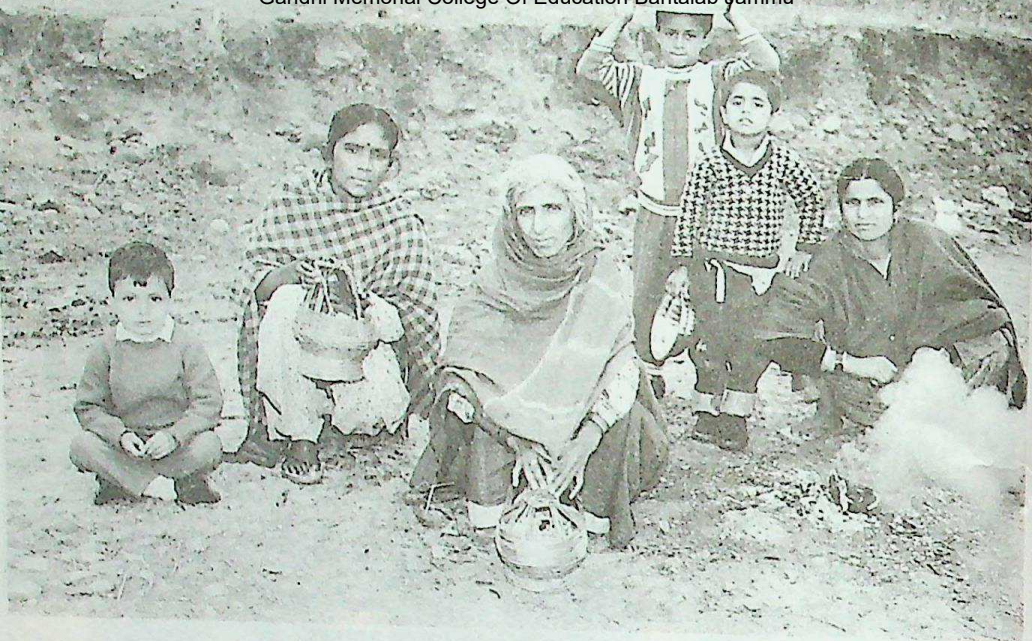
ROMESH PEER



Umanagari Temple burnt to ashes

Mrs. Sheela Kaw milking her cow while her husband pats the animal

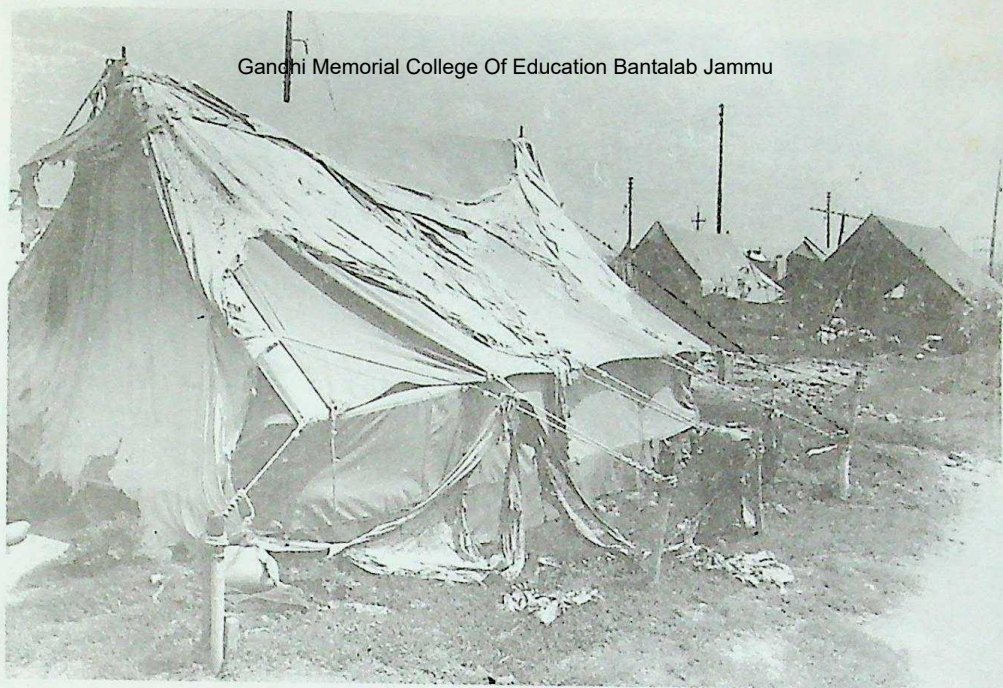




Muthi Camps.

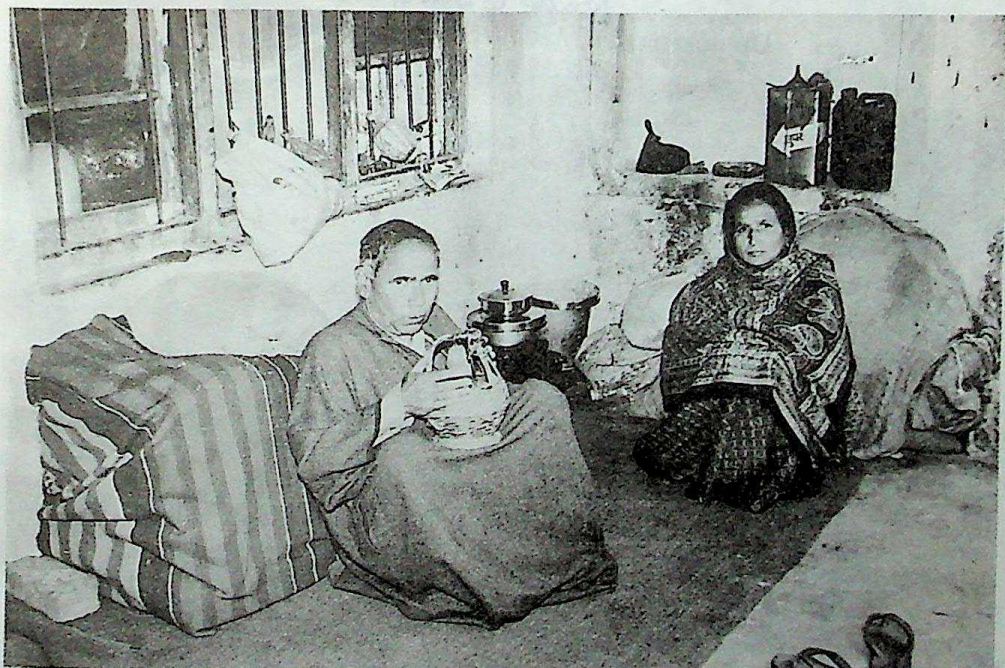
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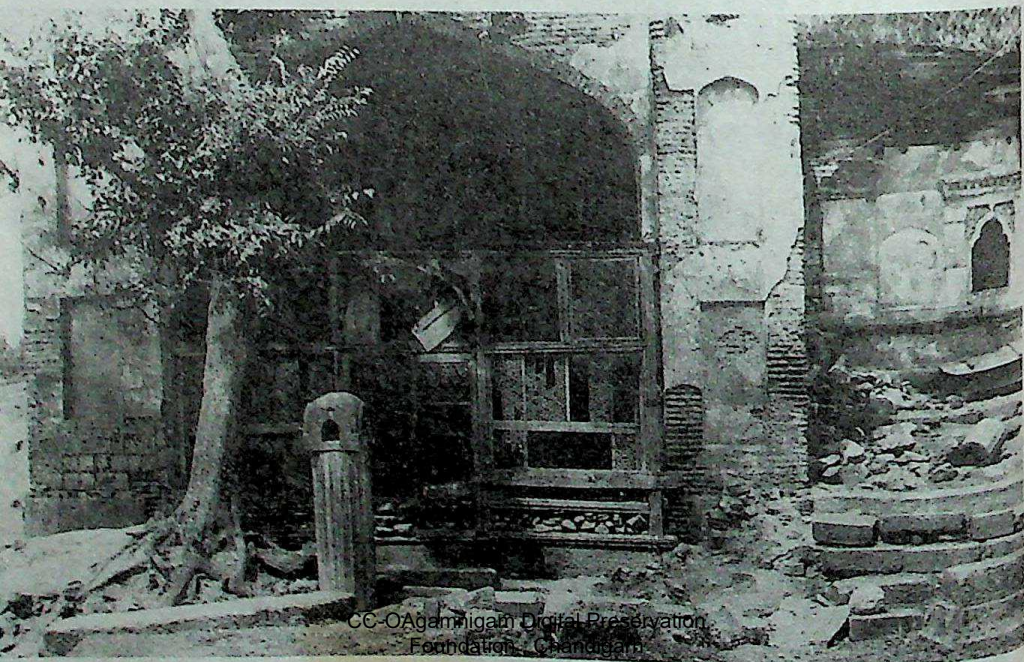
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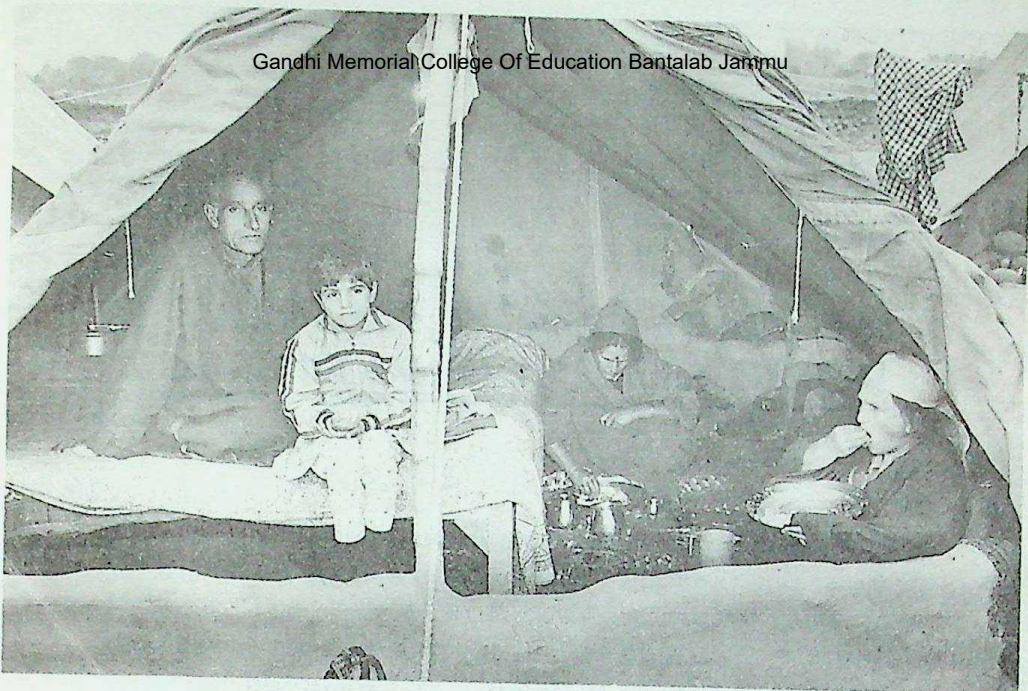




Loot

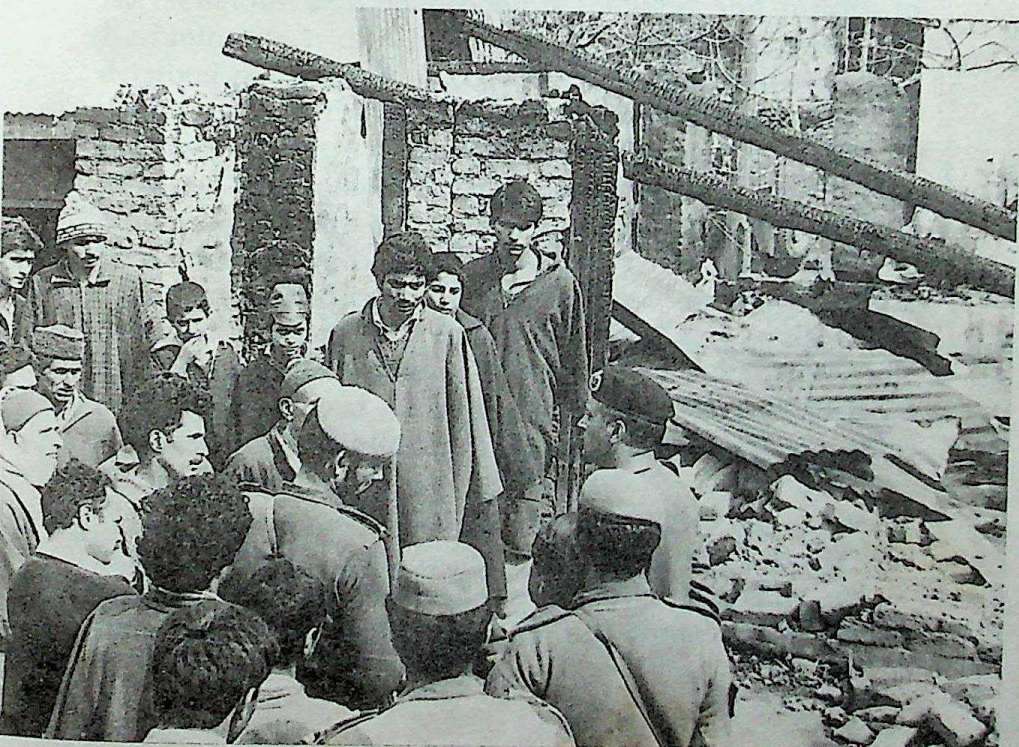
Temple to build the
Demolition of alMadina Shaibe Mosque





Muthi Camps.

D.G. Police – 1986 Loot & Plunder



18 INTER-FACE BETWEEN HINDUISM AND ISLAM—A MISCONCEPTION

Bamzai and Bazaz have waxed eloquent on the positive aspects of the inter-action between Hinduism and Islam in Kashmir. The analyses that they have offered to buttress their thesis are a pack of cliches and platitudes, which conventional historians take a resort to in utter contravention of historical facts and verities. Their thesis *prima facie* fails to hold out because of the fact that outside Muslims, so called dervishes of Bamzai and religious humanists of Bazaz encountered a powerful, well-entrenched and articulate religious and philosophical tradition and history in Kashmir, which they being intellectually too lay never understood nor did they endeavour to comprehend and delve deep into it to facilitate their proselytising campaigns and activities. Hindus, to them, appeared pinning their faith in all sorts of incompatible maze of ideas and beliefs, thus doling out an impression of not one religion, but multiple sects and religions harbouring the same name-tag. The varied strata and tenets of Hinduism were too profound for them, which, they only denigrated and straightaway rejected in a sheer snarl of contempt and indifference. The psychology of total decimation and demolition of material manifestations of Hindu culture and civilisation was born of blind negation on part of Muslims.

Not only in the beginnings, but even after the entrenchment of Muslim domination in Kashmir, not a single discernible attempt was made to discover Kashmir and its sum-total of heritage. Most of the segments of human

activity especially aesthetic in essence and nature were heretical and therefore forbidden fields for the Muslims where they dared not tread and had no history, cultivation and capacity to tread. The processes of inter-face get generated in discovering ideas and beliefs and their *raison d'être*, which, when interpreted and debated, inter-mingle with diverse paradigms, approaches and premises giving rise to a new pattern. In Kashmir the pattern never came into being because Islam globally has a history of spurning and rejecting the roots of the countries where the citizens are unable and forbidden to own and appreciate a pyramid, a Martand or a statue of Buddha in deep meditation. Muslims from outside Kashmir lacking in the spirit of quest had very weak and infirm intellectual and cultural instrumentalities and traditions and did not penetrate through query and quest the solid monolith of Hindu-Buddhist-vaishnavite thought amalgam but brutally vandalised and demolished the whole baffling monolith. They burnt and destroyed books but never wrote a single treatise on Hindu thought and its underlying principles even from a highly critical point of view. How many of them learnt Sanskrit and interpreted Sanskrit works on varied branches of learning and religion. Forced Conversion admittedly are not a feature and cardinal principle of christianity and that is why the Christian erudites assiduously learnt Sanskrit as the idiom of Indian culture and thought process and probed to know and discover the past of India to enable them to persuade, not force and coerce, the Hindus to accept christianity with its allied tenets and precepts with a view to humanising them as per their colonial parlance.

What has, in reality, misled Bamzai and Bazaz into sponsoring a thesis of inter-face between Hinduism and Islam is the non-purge and retention of Hindu practices, attitudes and rituals by the Muslims even after they were tortured and coerced to accept Islam. The neo-converts to Islam had miserably suffered two defeats, one that they as Hindus were politically discomfited and even as converts to

Islam were kept away as untouchables and hatefults from sharing and tasting the fruits and privileges of power on an equal footing with the outside Muslim masters in corridors of power and secondly they were forcibly converted to Islam and thus smarted under a deep sense of guilt and schizophrenia. The twin defeats forced them to fall back upon and seek a re-affirmation of their identity which, though severely threatened and lost, could be provided and reinforced only by sticking fast to the practices they were habituated and inured to and in their quest of identity Lal Ded with her Indian thought and spirit grew and emerged into a symbol of that identity and Nand Rishi despite his abominable conversionary activities as the perpetuator of the same identity. It appears intriguing that Nand Rishi professing Islamic faith was not very enthusiastic about and dragged his feet from accepting the spiritual superiority of a Sayyid and contributed to a large measure in generating a psyche that led to a tremendous upsurge against the Sayyids, who had brutally spearheaded and sponsored Islamisation of Kashmir and slaughter of Hindus. The Rishi-cult undoubtedly embedded in the Hindu heritage of Kashmir in spite of its erratic deviations from the mainstream throve on the preservation of the indigenous ethos of Kashmir, thus establishing that the Muslims conquered only the body of India (Kashmir-mind) the soul of which is ever defiant and invincible.⁹⁴

Inter-action as such is a matter of two-way traffic and the Muslims with nothing to offer were never a party to this inter-action. If Muslims in the words of Sir Walter Lawrence have not abandoned the Hindu religion of Kashmir and Hindu practices⁹⁵ that never denotes and connotes mutual traffic and inter-action. It only signals failure of Islam in Kashmir as it was unable to provide and invest the neo-converts with an alternate culture-model in tune with uncompromising Islamic tenets and precepts.

19 REGENERATION OF KASHMIR UNDER THE SULTANS—A MERE FABRICATION

Invested with the superficial views serving his a *priori* model based on his instinct of identification with the aggressor, P.N. Bazaz strongly feels that the Sultans gaining political power and hegemony in Kashmir meant a qualitative change from that what was old to that what seemingly had a ring of being new and novel and the change, to him, had a regenerative impact in Kashmir. Very recently the votaries of secessionism in Kashmir have re-cycled the same idea and have characterised the advent of Islam in the region of Kashmir as a ray that dispels darkness from all corners, thus establishing the obliteration of the racial memory of the converts. What Bazaz has put and what votaries of Islam have to say in this behalf do not seem to stand the acid-test of history, which gives a thorough exposure to the verbiage that has been lavishly utilised to invest a non-fact with the raiment of a fact.

Historically, Lalitaditya and Avantivarman built up and consolidated gargantuan empires with well laid-out political and economic structures. These periods of Kashmir history are of great significance as there was a tremendous economic and political regeneration in Kashmir with their impact and imprint on the growth and development of arts and crafts, architecture and sculpture, aesthetics and to cap them all, philosophy touching a new apogee. The achievements in their totality registered during the Hindu period of history instilled cynical inferiority among the Muslims who brutally levelled and destroyed them and the ravaged

ruins ever in their muteness relate the epochal saga of grandeur and glory. To negate and belittle the past of Kashmir, there has been a colonial tendency to attribute everything that Kashmir has to Zain-ul-abidin and other Muslim rulers who might have introduced certain new arts and crafts of Persian origins in Kashmir. But, Zain-ul-abidin and other Muslim monarchs were not ruling over Africa, which has wallowed in absolute darkness in terms of human history and civilisation. That Kashmir was steeped in the mire of backwardness and primitivity with no history and culture prior to the advent of Islam in Kashmir and Islam civilised it is a pale and futile version of the Christian idea of 'White-man's burden'. That the Muslims like Shakespeare's Prospero in the *Tempest* had the magical powers to civilise and humanise the calibans and Ariels is preposterous. Puts D.N.Dhar, "The change of reign from Hindu kings to Muslim Sultans was only a shift of the Kaleidoscope on the same scene from one colour to another. It was only a change in nomenclature and not in essence."⁹⁶

Had Bazaz deeply and carefully studied the history of Kashmir, especially the Muslim period, he would not have fudged facts and unnecessarily waxed eloquent on the so-called regeneration of Kashmir during the Sultanate period.

When Fateh Shah was occupying the throne of Kashmir, his Minister, Usman, divided the entire kingdom of Kashmir into three parts, one he kept for himself, and the other two parts were doled out to Shankar Raina and Nusrat Raina, two neo-converts to Islam. During the reign of Nazuk Shah, Abdul Magrey, his Minister, distributed huge tracts of land among his close relations. When Mohammad Shah was the ruler, Kazi Chak divided the entire valley of Kashmir into three parts, he gave one part to Sayyid Ibrahim Baihaqi to rule and kept the other part for himself and the third part he gave as a gift to the Sultan.⁹⁷ Sultan

Sikandar had allotted lands and Jagirs to the Muslim proselytisers seeking refuge in Kashmir when they were fleeing Persia due to Timur's persecution. The Sayyid nobles and their collaborators captured the seat of power in Kashmir and shared the power pie and looted the people and public exchequer with all vengeance and the neo-converts as entirely subservient to them were meted out the humiliating and abysmal treatment and in the words of Srivar were regarded as low as dust. And, to Bazaz, it was regeneration and great impact of Islam in Kashmir.

20 MUGHAL ANNEXATION AT THE BEHEST OF MUSLIMS

The Mughal annexation of Kashmir is said to be the direct outcome of the Shia-Sunni strife and turbulence that had ravaged and seeped deep to the very roots of Kashmir polity causing chaos, disruption and dismantling of societal and political structures. The Sunni Muslims as per their history in time complained of severe and unsparing political and religious oppression and persecution, which touched its culmination in the exile of Sheikh Hamza Maqdoom from the precincts of Srinagar city to Beerva village in Badgam District for spear-heading an anti-Shia movement. The two political advisers of the Sheikh, paradoxically designated as sufis, repaired to the imperial court of Akbar with the humble petition that the Sunni Muslims had been reeling and groaning under severe religious and political repression and needed an immediate retrieval and salvation from the chak rulers and their official machine. Yaqub Sarfi and Baba Dawood Khaki known as inveterate Shia-foes were involved in a maze of conspiracies against the chak regime.⁹⁸ That they sought for the intervention of the Mughal Emperor to dismantle the Shia-led regime was deemed as the only viable and acceptable course open to them.⁹⁹

Though being deliberately smoke-screened, yet there is clinching historical evidence available not only to suggest, but also to establish the leading role of Yaqub Sarfi in coaxing and inviting the Mughals for invasion of Kashmir. At the head of a Sunni delegation, he ostensibly apprised

the Mughal Emperor of the oppression perpetrated by the Chak fanatics as deviants from Islam on the Sunni Muslims, but in reality, he in his moves and motives was prompted by his sectarian and anti-Shia sentiments and prejudices. It is said that he even spelt-out in detail some of the conditions, which the emperor was required to act upon in the wake of the annexation of Kashmir to the vast Mughal empire. That the Muslims (Sunnis) would not be reduced to the position of slaves, they would not be oppressed and harnessed for begar (Corvee) and the treacherous Chak nobles would be kept away from the administrative management of Kashmir were the prime conditions stipulated by the delegation led by Sarfi. Muslims of the Sunni brand alone were his primary and over-riding concern. Not a word was said about the Kashmiri Pandits, who were marauded, brutalised and massacred for the religion they espoused and harboured. They were hounded out and obliged to roam about the mountainous regions and plains of India to save themselves from the hurricane of Muslim bigotry and intolerance. It is within the realms of possibility that the Emperor had his covetous eyes on the splendourous vale of Kashmir and even had prior plans to annexe Kashmir. But, the Sunni-Muslim leadership after prolonged and concerted deliberations sent a mission to the Imperial court, thus providing an alibi to the Emperor for an armed intervention in Kashmir. The front-line objective of the Sunni-Muslims was only to turn turtle the apple-cart of the Shia-Muslims and destroy their hegemony over Kashmir. It is said that Yaqub Sarfi and Baba Dawood Khaki cringed and crooned before the Emperor for immediate despatch of troops to the valley and when troops were despatched, Sarfi accompanied the Imperial army to be at its beck and call and also serve as its guide to facilitate the conquest of Kashmir by Mughals.

It was at the persuasion of Sarfi that the recalcitrant Chiefs of Karnah (West of Kashmir) surrendered to the Mughal army, which as a matter of strategy utilised that as

a vital base for further forays and incursions into the valley of Kashmir. The emperor possessed of ample fund of military experience made his own assessments and calculations and virtually ignored and paid no heed to the boastful claims of Sarfi about the unstinted support that he drew from the fractious nobles and grandees of Kashmir for the Mughal annexation of the territory under the Chak sway and rule.¹⁰⁰ The troops were despatched via Hirpur route and in the battle that ensued at Hastivanj, Sarfi was seriously wounded and was removed from the battle-field by his friends in the army.

The significant role played by the Sunni leadership operating under the direct guidance and patronage of Sheikh Hamza Maqdoom is deliberately being played down and even rejected as untrue by the formulators and sponsors of the theory that Kashmir lost its independence with the Mughals annexing it to their empire ruled from Delhi and Agra in 1586 A.D.

Records M.J.Akbar, "Kashmir suddenly became part of a larger world and peace of this world of empire would last for more than a century and a half, that was the extraordinary legacy of Akbar."¹⁰¹

He further records, "A standard land revenue policy brought stability and growth to the largely agricultural economy."¹⁰²

21 LEARNING NOT ENOUGH, WIELD A WEAPON-KRIPA RAM DUTTA

Aurangzeb, a bigot to the marrow of his bone, was a scourge for the Hindus and worked havoc on them through forcible conversions to the Islamic faith. It was at his behest that the governor of Kashmir, Iftikhar Khan (1671-75) equally a bigot, unsheathed the sword of Islam against the Kashmiri Pandits with the objective of securing their conversion to Islam. At this moment of grave crisis, some Pandits, wise and learned, under the leadership of Kripa Ram Dutta of Bhawan, District Anantnag, decided to repair to the Amarnath cave, held as an abode of Shiva, to pray to the Lord and seek His guidance for the resolution of crisis they were faced with.

At the holy cave, Kripa Ram, an ardent believer in Shiva's grace, had a dream in which Lord Shiva introduced him to the address of Guru Tegh Bahadur and directed him to seek his guidance to meet the challenge posed by the demon of bigotry and religious blindness. Acting upon the Lord's Counsel, Kripa Ram at the head of a delegation of 500 Kashmiri Pandits crossed over the mountain ramparts to reach Anandpur village in the Punjab to call on Guru Tegh Bahadur.

The Pandits in extreme agony and distress presented a petition to the Guru in which it was stated that they were being subjected to religious persecution, the sacred threads that they were putting on as a mark of religious initiation were being forcibly removed from their person and each day such threads weighing a maund and a quarter were

being snapped and burnt and cows without number were being mercilessly slaughtered to inflict grave hurt on the Hindus. Finally they sought for his intercession and protection.

The Guru in great distress and anguish pondered for a while and informed the suppliant Brahmans that the brutal atrocities on the Hindus could be stemmed only after a great sacrifice.

Tegh Bahadur's son, Gobind Rai, prescient and precocious, present on the scene fully realising the gravity of the distressing situation and exhibiting exemplary courage and zeal urged his father to undertake the sacrifice for the protection and preservation of Hindu faith, which was under a severe onslaught from the Muslim fanaticism and bigotry.

Guru Tegh Bahadur advised the Kashmiri Pandits to go to Delhi and tell the bigot in the emperor that he should first convert Tegh Bahadur to Islamic faith and then all of them would follow suit sans any equivocation. The same was verbatim conveyed to the emperor. Losing his cool and flying into a spasm of rage, he summoned the Guru to Delhi. The Guru accompanied by five of his trusted and faithful disciples arrived in Delhi and Aurangzeb in all his fanatic fury and wrath asked him to embrace Islam or show some miracle to establish and prove his credentials of guruship. As a spiritualist of high order, the Guru denied that he could perform a miracle and valiantly and without a quiver refused to join the fold of Islam. Aurangzeb ordered his execution and it was thus that the guru attained martyrdom.¹⁰³

The martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur proved a waterloo for the forces of intolerance, hate and religious fanaticism. The Hindus throughout the country were aflame with a deep sense of revenge and in the end it got forged and mobilised into a strong resistance movement led by Guru Gobind Singh, who formed the 'Khalsa Panth'

with the avowed objective of fighting and defeating the Muslim bigotry and fanaticism. In generating and organising the resistance movement, Kripa Ram Dutta played a remarkable role by nurturing and teaching Guru Gobind Singh at the preparatory stage till he flowered as the guiding symbol of the resistance movement against intolerance and fanatic orthodoxy. It was Kripa Ram, who is said to have innovated the vital idea of combining Shāstra (learning) with Shastra (Weapon) and infused the same into the great Guru, who through his divine vision and prescience moulded the Sikhs into a patriotic martial race. He taught the Guru Sanskrit and through it introduced him to the entire store-house of Hindu lore and learning and as a follower of Sikh faith fell to the forces of bigotry in the battle of Chamkaur, thus materialising his significant thesis into actual praxis.

22 MUSLIMS INVITE AFGHANS

With the Mughal empire declining and in doldrums, two prominent Muslims Mir Muquim Kanth and Khawaja Zahir Didamari repeated the role-model of Yaqub Sarfi and Baba Dawood Khaki by begging of Ahmad Shah Abdali to aggress Kashmir with a view to annexing it to Kabul. It was an 'Islamic invitation' extended to Abdali, who was deemed a saviour sans minding and evaluating the havoc he was wreaking on north of India. Abdali was not so impolitic as to miss the opportunity and without prevarication and dither despatched his troops under the command of Abdullah Khan Ishk Aqasi to capture Kashmir for Kabul. After a fierce battle for a fortnight, Ishk Aqasi vanquished his opponent and marched into Kashmir triumphantly and the entire Muslim population hailed him as a victor.

The Afghans in their essential traits and characteristics were tribals, ferocious, cruel and inhuman and it did not take them long to reveal their visage of savagery and ferocity. According to Walter Lawrence, "when we pass from the Mughal period to the period of Shahani Durani, we pass to a time of brutal tyranny, unrelieved by good works, chivalry and honour".¹⁰⁴ As they were wantonly cruel and insatiably avaricious, the dreams and visions of Kashmiri Muslims punctured like a balloon when Ishk Aqasi in complicity with Mir Muquim Kanth applied red-hot iron-bars to a Muslim business-man to extort a huge sum of money from him.¹⁰⁵ It virtually shell-shocked them and was contrary to what they had expected. The Afghans though

Muslims did not spare them when they started on their looting bouts by the imposition of enormous tax-burdens on the Kashmiri populace. So, the Muslims viscerally hated them and nick-named all breeds of Afghans as Kakad Khans, foolish and low in intelligence, an epithet which the Kashmiri Pandits had sarcastically coined for them. Had the Afghans directed and utilised all the weapons in their arsenal of barbarity and brutality against the Pandits, that would have dizzied them into an ecstasy and given them an unbounded satisfaction.

It is axiomatically known world over that the extirpation of Kufra (infidelity) is a divine mission with every Muslim, original or convert, and the Afghan savages embarked upon the same mission. The Kashmiri Pandits harbouring a non-Islamic faith were the declared enemies of Islam and as a matter of religious duty and obligation were to be subjected to brute force and harsh coercion. The mis-deeds that the Afghans indulged in and the tyrannies that they perpetrated have earned them the sobriquet of 'butchers'. The Pandits were looted, plundered and killed with impunity. They were mercilessly hurled into the waters of Dal Lake to meet their watery grave. The obstreperous Bomba tribals and brigands were hired to harass and brutalise them and coerce them to join the fold of Islam. They burnt them alive in their own houses. They killed them and their butchered remnants, stinking and smelling, littered over the streets of Srinagar for days on end with ravenous crows prying over them and the relatives of the butchered Pandits shrieking and screaming with none to soothe them and alleviate their sufferings. The Pandits known for their love of learning were not permitted to put their scholars to any form of schooling and educative processes. They were divested of their jobs, and thus were deprived of their livelihood. Their women-folk were subjected to all forms of dishonour and ignominy. Lifting them and exporting them to Kabul was a usual occurrence. To protect them from such atrocities, the young budding beauties were disfigured

and defaced by the flecking and mutilation of their body-parts and were married off before the onset of puberty.

The Kashmiri Pandits were subjected to cruel taxes, levies and punitive exactions. The hated Jazia (poll tax) was imposed on them. A separate capitation tax to the tune of Rs.12,500 per annum had to be paid by every Pandit to the ruler at Kabul. An amazing punitive tax known as Smoke-tax (Zari-Dood)¹⁰⁶ was laid on them. In case they failed to pay it, they were intimidated, tortured and put to flashing swords.

Records Tyndle Bisco, "It is said that during the Afghan rule in Kashmir (1752-1819) the Afghans were in the habit of riding into the Kashmiri houses on their horse-back, stabling their horses in the lower portion and occupying the rest for themselves. The Kashmiris were unable to check these outrages by force. They devised therefore the plan of having so low doors that not only the intruder had to dismount, but also to bow his head on entry. As the Afghans were haughty and no one of them was willing to make obeisance to a local person, they were forced to remain outside."¹⁰⁷

Writes Walter Lawrence, "The Pandits, who formerly wore moustaches, were forced to grow beards, turbans and shoes were forbidden and the tika or fore-head mark was interdicted."¹⁰⁸

He further records, "The Jazia or poll-tax on Hindus was revived and many Brahmans either fled the country, were killed or were converted to Islam."¹⁰⁹

Asad Khan—A Savage

Asad Khan, a class oppressor, boasted that the savage Nadir Shah was his prototype. Walter Lawrence records about his atrocities on Hindus "It was his practice to tie up the Pandits, two in grass sacks and sink them in the Dal Lake. As an amusement, a pitcher filled with odure would be placed on a Pandit's head and the Musalmans would pelt

the pitcher with stones till it broke, the unfortunate Hindu being blinded with filth.¹¹⁰

According to Forster, "Asad Khan stands in the foremost rank of tyrants". Concurrers Fergusson, "Asad Khan gave an unchecked expression to his sadistic tendencies. The Hindu Pandits as Kafirs or infidels were naturally the first objects of his persecution. The atrocities of Asad Khan included tying up Pandits by their hands back to back and throwing them into the lake. The hated Jazia, a tax on Hindus, was re-imposed and numerous disabilities were placed on the Pandits and their religion."¹¹¹

Hazar Khan—A Fiend

Puts Walter Lawrence, "Mir Hazar was another fiend who used leather bags instead of grass sacks for the drowning of Brahmans. He drowned Shias and Brahmans indiscriminately."¹¹²

Atta Mohammad Khan—A Psychopath

Fergusson records about Ata Mohammad Khan, "Women rather than torture were his reigning passion and beautiful Hindu girls had their features defaced by their parents rather than that they should attract the attention of the agents of this insatiable ruler."¹¹³

Puts Walter Lawrence, "Ata Mohammad Khan was a ferocious libertine and his agent, an old woman Koshib, was the terror of the Brahman parents, who rather than allow the degradation of their daughters destroyed their beauty by shaving their heads or cutting their nose."¹¹⁴

Haji Karim Dad Khan—A Looter

Records P.N.K. Bamzai, "He purposely kept the tax gatherers Aslam and Babu, in hiding accusing the Pandit community of their murder. He collected their leading members and keeping them in close confinement, subjected them to suffocating fumes from cow dung. They implored,

they importunated, but the heartless Haji would not release them until they agreed to pay an annual tax (known as Zari Dood or Smoke Tax) of 50,000 rupees."¹¹⁵

Giving an estimate of the Afghan rule, Walter Lawrence pithily puts, "Pathan rulers are only remembered for their brutality and cruelty and it is said that they thought no more of cutting heads than of plucking a flower".¹¹⁶

In the same vein, Forster laconically records, "They rarely issued an order without showing the side of their hatchet, a common weapon of the Afghans."¹¹⁷

23 BIRBAL DHAR AND SIKHS

The Afghans littered the valley of Kashmir with images of gore and violence and as a fall-out of their primeval and unbridled savagery and ferocity, the Kashmiri Pandits in streams buzzed off their homes and hearths to sanctuaries across the mountain ramparts in the plains of India. As evidenced by records of sufficient veracity, their numbers in the valley fell to a mere seven thousand, four thousand in the city of Srinagar and three thousand in the hamlets and villages, near and distant. According to Moorcraft, the unprecedented depletion of Kashmiri Pandit population was the direct outcome of ruthless persecution that they were subjected to.¹¹⁸ Concurring with the views of Moorcraft, Cunningham states that the ancestors of Kashmiri Brahmans now settled in Delhi, Lucknow and elsewhere in the plains of India were refugees from Afghan oppression and cruelty.¹¹⁹

Dismayed and shocked by the ruthless persecution of his co-religionists, Birbal Dhar, a notable noble of Kashmir, suddenly disappeared from the landscape of Kashmir alongwith his son causing a gnashing anxiety to the Afghan governor, Azim Khan, rapacious and brutal and with the active aid of Raja Dhyani Singh, brother of Raja Gulab Singh, appeared in the glittering court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the Punjab. It was after a lot of persuasion that Ranjit Singh nodded the despatch of his troops to Kashmir to annexe it to his kingdom. The Afghan resistance petered out in face of the pitch and thrust of the Sikh onslaught and the Hindu conquest of Kashmir was celebrated for full three days.

The Sikhs were highly shocked at the sight of havoc that had been wrought on the Kashmiri Pandits all through the period the Muslims held sway over Kashmir. Their temples had been ravaged and levelled; they were butchered and murdered; they were not permitted to worship their gods and goddesses and their women-folk were abducted for export to Kabul. They were burdened with unjust and inequitable taxes and exactions to satiate the hunger of the Muslim rulers at Kabul.

Now it was the turn of the Muslims to suffer. A brick for brick and tooth for tooth policy was pursued. In sheer retaliation the Sikhs closed Jama Masjid built on the ruins of a Hindu temple and a Buddhist Vihara for prayers, stopped azaan to call the faithfuls to prayers, imposed levies and taxes on the Muslims, banned cow-slaughter and declared Pather Masjid as property of the state. Phoola Singh, a Sikh General, trained his guns at the Mir Ali Mosque on the plea that it was raised on the plinth of a temple that was pillaged and destroyed. The said - mosque was saved only at the intervention of Birbal Dhar, who has been showered with bouquets and brickbats for this act of his by a substantial number of writers on Kashmir history.

About the Sikh phase of Kashmir conquest, a host of lies have been told and a number of half-truths have been woven with a view to discrediting the improvements that the Sikhs registered in Kashmir economy and politics and the relief that they brought to the oppressed people. The latest attempt in the vicious propaganda launched against all shades of Hindus is Altaf Hussain's book 'Paradise wounded', which is said to have been written by the votaries of secessionism in America and issued out in his name. But the available historical evidences and notices belie all what is said in the book by way of aiding and abetting the on-going terrorism in Kashmir.

Writes Fergusson, "The condition of Kashmir under the Sikhs was no doubt an improvement on that under the Afghans. The Hindus to whom the Sikhs are in many ways

very near benefited most and the disabilities under which they had been unable to practise the rites of their religion were removed. It was now the turn of the Muslims to suffer. Mosques were closed, the call to prayer was forbidden and capital punishment was awarded for the killing of a cow."¹²⁰

Walter lawrence puts, "It must have been an intense relief to all classes in Kashmir to see the downfall of the evil rule of the Pathans. I do not mean Sikh rule was benign and good, but it was at any rate better than that of the Afghans."¹²¹

Records Baron von Hugel, "The dreadful cruelties perpetrated by their earlier rulers, who, for the smallest offence, punished them with the loss of their noses and ears, make poor Kashmiris well satisfied with their present comparatively mild government."¹²²

24 LOOT OF 1931

Despite being autocratic and recalcitrant, Maharaja Hari Singh in his address to the chamber of Princes in London was unequivocal and unmistakable in his support of the growing demand for Indian independence which generated alarm waves for the British imperialists ever keen to perpetuate their hegemony over India and other Princely states. Plans were set afoot and conspiracies hatched to keep the Maharaja under the heel of pressure so that he would not dare thwart and impede the British strategies to meet the challenges posed to their vast sprawling empire by the Russian expansion in the belts of regions contiguous to their territories. On the chess-board of British geo-political strategies, Kashmir had notched up as a key-region and the *bonafides* of Maharaja harbouring patriotic sympathies for the Indian independence became suspect and hence it was deemed strategic and highly expedient to pin him down in the communal tension that was covertly and overtly fuelled and heightened by inciting the Muslim majority against him as he was harbouring a faith that was not Islamic.

Sheikh Abdullah was spearheading a movement against the Maharaja through the Reading Room Party and as such had engrossed focus and is said to have been picked up for the role of an agent and the same is revealed and established by the bunch of letters which were shown to Pandit Nehru (who felt shocked) by Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, the then Food Minister of India, when the stage was set for the Sheikh's dismissal in the wake of his fiery and treach-

erous statements questioning the irrevocability of Kashmir's accession to India.

The Reading Room Party as per its role-model in Kashmir politics was communal to the pulp, blood and bone as its bias against the Kashmiri Pandits was so pronounced that it prepared the ground for the blatant loot and murder of Kashmiri Pandits in July, 1931. The battle-cry against them was set off by the malicious and apochryphal propaganda of the typical Muslim brand that they had an absolute strangle-hold of the state services. The fact, to the contrary, was that the state services though very limited in number were domineered and monopolised by the Punjabi and Bengali Muslims and Hindus. Despite impeccable academic credentials, the Kashmiri Pandits were reluctantly recruited to the lower rung services for a mere pittance which was also stopped by the then powers that be in view of the mounting pressures on the Maharaja.

Lacking in the discernment of a modern mind, Sheikh Abdullah nursed a personal grudge against the Maharaja as he was refused a lectureship in an academic college, not out of religious bias, but because of his low academic merit. His competitor said to be a Kashmiri Pandit had a much brighter record than that of the tall Sheikh. Steeped in the culture of Aligarh Muslim University, the Sheikh with a mind *fine de siecle* and thinking communal straightaway sans any hesitation leapt to the conclusion that he was dropped because the Maharaja was a Hindu and his competitor too was a Hindu. It speaks volumes about the low mind of Sheikh Abdullah, who invested all his prowess and energies to metamorphose the Reading Room Party into a seminary of religious venom, hatred and animosity against the Pandits.

The Sheikh wanted the Maharaja to show him special consideration on grounds of educational and economic back-wardness of the community he belonged to. Myopic in his views and outlook, he could not see and discover poverty, backwardness and deprivation prevailing in

Kashmiri Pandits. His competitor was also a man from a poor and backward family. Despite economic disabilities and other inhibiting factors, the fact remains that the Kashmiri Pandits all through their chequered history and despite Muslim oppression have not broken their tryst with learning and education while the Muslims as a converted lot cultivating other priorities parted ways perhaps with no remorse with the tradition resulting in their educational backwardness which was perpetuated by the self-seeking Mullahs harbouring repugnance to liberal forms of education. Credit must be given to the Maharaja that he firmly stuck to the rules and stipulations that were laid down for recruitment to the institutions of higher learning and did not relax, bend and flout them (as Sheikh did when in office) only to introduce the virus of mediocrity into the mainstream of Kashmir polity.

The Reading Room Party with Sheikh Abdullah as its moving spirit earned patronage and favours from the Muslim landlords, shawl tycoons, parochial mullahs and Muslim educated elite in government service. The landlords owing allegiance to the Maharaja patronised the Sheikh with a view to furthering their self interests and increasing their clout with the ruler for more economic favours and concessions. It will not be out of place to put that the Sheikh, at the behest of Muslim landlords, was harnessed to collect funds for organising a grand reception in honour of the Maharaja when he returned in 1931 from Europe where his wife had delivered a male child. In an attempt to make in-roads into the Muslim gentry he even accepted the convenorship of the Muslim Jagirdar Committee without any prevarication and outrage. The shawl tycoons were on the same wave-length and nurtured and pursued their interests by openly aligning themselves and making a common cause with the Muslim Jagirdars. The mullahs with obscurantism and intolerance as their guiding - star strained every nerve and fibre to keep the Muslim masses away from the light of education. The Sheikh sought and

accepted their support and patronage and the fact that all the mullahs in the city of Srinagar lending their whole-hearted support to the Reading Room Party which was presided over by the demon of Muslim bigotry testifies to its role-profile of inciting communal passions and awakening furies against their religious enemies. The Muslim elite in government service were ambitious of grabbing higher positions not on the strength of their merit and achievements, but on the basis of religion they espoused and held.

The Reading Room Party with mosque as its immediate extension emerged as a focal centre for execution and fructification of the British intrigues against the Maharaja who for his anti-British stances was pressured and cowed down to hand over the complete control of the Gilgit Agency to the Britishers for their strategic ends. As per available evidences, Sheikh Abdullah who had started strutting the religio-political scene of Kashmir through his faculty of reciting the Quranic verses in a mellifluous voice in and outside the precincts of a mosque had forged clandestine linkages with the British Political Department which in essence was a receptacle of the British and Indian spies recruited by the British imperialists for garnering their political interests.

The plethora of letters that the Sheikh had written to the spies of the Political Department explicitly reveal his direct and definite bonhomie with the British operatives planning and executing measures and schemes to nurse and safeguard their vital interests in Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah in the role of a British agent was first highlighted and thoroughly exposed in a very significant article published by the 'Blitz' in its issue of 24th April, 1965 and the same was reproduced *verbatim* by H.L. Saxena in his book 'The Tragedy in Kashmir'. The details in the article are comprehensive and are fully substantiated by the letters written by the Sheikh to his mentors whose patronage he sought and enjoyed at the threshold of his religio-political career till he

emerged as a formidable force for the Maharaja to reckon with.

The Sheikh motivated by and suffused with pan - Islamism of Dr. Iqbal and communalism of the brand of Aligrah Muslim university has been openly charged with being in regular correspondence and contact with B.J. Glancy, Col. C. W. Colvin and Lt. Col. L.E. Lang who had been deputed on a mission and had earned notoriety for spying operations in the Punjab and Kashmir.¹²³ The mission that was said to be entrusted to the Sheikh and for which he was said to be roped in was to breed discontent and disenchantment among the Muslims of Kashmir and alienate them from the Maharaja and his power apparatus and also beat Kashmiri Pandits into submission for their vociferous and strident anti - British views and expressions.

It was notoriously known that the Sheikh had pro - Ahmadiya persuasions and links though Muslims as a flock detested them as deviants from Islam.¹²⁴ It was through the British spies that the Sheikh was said to have formed a close rapport with the Ahmadiyas who had a well - cemented organisation and were highly rich and affluent. In their political positions the Ahmadiyas were known as British lackeys and footmen.¹²⁵

For being affiliated with the Britishers and also for the tonnes of money they spent in Kashmir for furtherance of their mission and also for Muslim welfare by way of instituting scholarships for Muslim boys the Sheikh established a tie - up with the Ahmadiyas operating in the Punjab where they were equally suspected and abhorred by the orthodox Muslims. His bonhomie and nexus with the Ahmadiyas was an open secret and there were lot many groups and individuals who not only resented, but bitterly opposed his political and religious affinity and contacts with the Ahmadiyas. The Sheikh perhaps at the bidding of his masters not only invited but paved the way for the Ahmadiya intervention in Kashmir. Crafty as the British spies were, they doled out an impression to the Maharaja

that the Ahmadiyas were their stark enemies and warned him of their anti - state activities and designs , but aware of the nexus between the Britishers and Ahmadiyas, Maharaja Hari Singh in doldrums, despite his brave face, dared not devise and execute stern measures to thwart and put an end to the Ahmadiya intervention in Kashmir.

Ahrars with their progressive camouflage were on the same wave - length with the Ahmadiyas in their anti - Maharaja and anti-Hindu threats and agitations. Apparently votaries of Hindu - Muslim amity, the Ahrars through the despatch of their Jathas and groups into the State created conditions for loot and murder of Hindus. Stridently anti - Maharaja and seemingly anti - British, the Ahrars objectively contributed to the British design of fomenting and proliferating the communal conflicts and tensions to de-stabilise the Maharaja to further the imperialist designs and machinations. Kashmir practically marked a reversal of their policy of inter-communal peace and amity as they vigorously fanned and fuelled Muslim communalism to incredible limits. Their commitment to the congress as a secular organisation was so fake and tenuous that they deserted the congress ranks to join the Muslim League or formed their own outfits in the wake of M.A. Jinnah's declaration of Pakistan as the separate home-land for Muslims. The Reading Room Party was closely knit with Ahrars and basked in their patronage and was maintaining a regular liaison with them for political and religious mischief. The Ahrars essentially were communal though they externally donned secular robes. They had hatred for the Maharaja as he was a Hindu and had Muslims as his subjects. Their vigorous programme of despatching groups (Jathas) into the state was also perceived to counter-act the political hold that the Ahmadiyas were fast gaining in Kashmir through lavish spendings.¹²⁶

The Punjabi Muslim press under the lavish patronage of the British imperialists launched a propaganda blitz against the Maharaja who was denounced as a heretic with no

right to rule over Muslim masses. The tone and tenor of the published material was blatantly sectarian and communal inciting the Muslims to launch a crusade against the Hindu Maharaja and his Hindu administration. The 'Muslim outlook' and 'Inqalab' as the two front-ranking dailies published from the Punjab fabricated and disseminated wanton lies and half-truths about Kashmir conveying the same theme - song of incitement to revolt against the Hindu ruler and his administration.¹²⁷ The dailies couched and soaked in the language of fire and brimstone and more than most communal venom were extremely popular with the members of the Reading Room Party which was committed to the working out of the assigned task of inciting the communal passions and igniting the communal fires to pave way for direct British intervention in Kashmir affairs.

Puts M.K.Teng, "Journals and akhbars issued from Lahore and elsewhere taking up the cause of Muslims were patronised by the British to browbeat the Maharaja."¹²⁸

Qadeer—the Waiter

The British-Ahmadiya-Ahrar-Reading Room Party nexus cumulatively generated forces, evil and vicious, which perpetrated loot and murder on the Kashmiri Pandits in the wake of a seditious speech delivered by one named Qadeer, a cook in the employ of an English Major, a non-local, non-entity, illiterate and puny, at the Mir Ali Mosque where Muslims had mobilised in unprecedented numbers for a political act of selecting their representatives for an interface and dialogue with the Maharaja.

Who was Qadeer? How did he suddenly appear on the scene to spit out his Anti-Hindu venom? Who had planted him? Who had given him contents for his speech? Who had guided him during rehearsals before the actual delivery of his speech?

Such as these pertinent and vital questions have been deliberately obfuscated and smoke-screened by the Reading Room Party and its prime mover Sheikh Abdullah lest

their role in the nefarious game of inflicting loot and murder on the Kashmiri Pandits should get revealed and exposed. P.N. Bazaz as a contemporary was politically proactive and had a penchant for dwelling on the failings and foibles of the Sheikh, but he too had maintained an intriguing silence on the issue of dramatic appearance of Qadeer, the waiter, on the scene of the mosque, a centre-stage of Muslim politics and Muslim communalism, and without irradiating it has broadly contributed to putting the issue under a thick cloak of secrecy. P.N. Bamzai while detailing out the events leading to the loot and murder of Pandits has stopped short of scratching the surface to unveil the real identity of Qadeer and his mentors.¹²⁹ D.N. Dhar has hit the nail on the head when he quotes G.H. Khan that Qadeer was brought on the scene by Ahmadiyas who were British agents.¹³⁰ but has failed to establish and formulate the whole spectrum.

Be it put that Qadeer was an Ahmadiya plant and as is well-known Ahmadiyas with their net-work were in the thick of Kashmir politics and in the pursuit of their mission were spending incredible sums to lure and buy followers for their creed and more than most had the credentials of being British agents and had cultivated complete rapport and deep links with the Reading Room Party functioning under the emergent leadership of Sheikh Abdullah who had his patrons from amongst the top-brass of Muslim society known as 'Rayisan-i-Kashmir'. Molvi Yusuf Shah's admission that Qadeer was catapulted on the scene by Ahmadiyas exposes the whole circuit that could be held responsible for loot and murder of Kashmiri Pandits.¹³¹

If anybody can, let him controvert the thesis that it was British-Ahmadiya-Sheikh Abdullah nexus that conspired to catapult Qadeer on the scene of the Mir Ali Mosque to precipitate a crisis for the Maharaja and Kashmiri Pandits as the sigmatised enemies of Islam. It is a common sense averment that Qadeer alien to the social and political milieu prevailing in Kashmir could not have dramatically

mounted the dias sans connivance, abetment and consent of the Reading Room Party and its chief mentors. The view that a Muslim flaunting as an educationist had no mean role in preparing the contents of Qadeer's speech and also honing up of his oratorical skills cannot be dismissed as a cock and bull story.

Dilating on the basic character of the communal uprising of 13th July 1931, D.N.Dhar proclaims, "It was the combination of Maulvis, landed interests and the merchantile bourgeoisie which was leading the people for their vested interests. They had aroused the fury of the masses in the city not on concrete economic and political issues, but on religious frenzy which led to a catastrophe."¹³²

He further puts, "Serious allegations have been made that the movement in 1931 had British encouragement (involvement) and in fact it was sponsored by them and part of the leadership (the entire Muslim leadership) acted at their behest. It is believed that they wanted to punish Maharaja Hari Singh for his role at the Round Table Conference and his confrontation with them."¹³³

M.J. AKBAR ON QADEER

M.J. Akbar's views on the Qadeer episode are replete with a penchant for investing a non-entity with a heroic hue and aura. Qadeer, to him, seemed to 'discover a new-identity'¹³⁴ when he was in Kashmir as 'a cook in the retinue of a European'. What was the identity that he discovered in Kashmir which otherwise in Peshawar he was lacking? How was it that he suddenly found a new identity in Kashmir? Akbar hails Qadeer's oratory as 'more spicy than his cuisine'? But, dismaying as it is, M.J. Akbar with all his calibre has viewed and assessed the entire episode in the light of oratory and cuisine and has missed import of the episode as part of a bigger game that the British played in accompaniment with their agents who were roped in and harnessed to fulfil and execute their geo-political objectives. Had he inquisitively probed deeper, he would have

discovered a sinister intrigue hatched by the British-Ahmadiya-Abdullah nexus to destabilise the Maharaja for his anti-British postures and in the process would have known that Qadeer was only a pawn to get things to a crisis - point paving way for direct British take over of the state by dislodging the Maharaja. Qadeer's oratory was doctored, packed with communal poison and was inflammatory. His arrest and trial let loose communal frenzy which was directed towards the Kashmiri Pandits like an artillery barrage.

P.N. BAZAZ'S Rhetoric on the Loot of 1931

P.N. Bazaz in his characteristic fashion has dragged his feet from exposing the Reading Room Party for its conspiratorial role in the perpetration of loot and murder on the Kashmiri Pandits. In a low key tone he accuses the Reading Room Party of 'having failed to cope with the situation'.¹³⁵ He records that 'the Muslim upper classes and communalists had an effective voice in the movement',¹³⁶ but bails out the Muslim communalists by digressing into 'the discontent among the rank and file of Muslims'.¹³⁷ He also accuses Hindus of their 'hostile and positively indiscriminate attitudes towards the nationalistic and communalistic aspirations of the Muslims'.¹³⁸ The riots that followed as per him were 'the work of goondas'.¹³⁹

With the glasses of Royism ever on his eyes P.N. Bazaz has made light of the 13th July, 1931 riots that were communal in orientation, content and thrust and has resorted to digressions designed to camouflage and obviate the religion-oriented motivations of the Muslims to loot and murder the Hindu Kafirs. That the Muslims were backward, illiterate and wallowing in dust and dirt was the result of their Muslim legacy bequeathed to them through six hundred years of Muslim rule and could be in no way the handiwork of Pandits, who certainly were an advanced and civilised section of the Kashmiri society by virtue of their liberalism and catholicity to orient themselves with-

out undue interference from priest or temple to the impact of new trends of thought and education. Mullahs as the ombudsmen of religious interpretations and more than most as the religious police obstructed Muslims from taking to liberal education free from the virus of fanaticism and were, in reality, their enemies who through a new renaissance had to be thwarted and put at bay and if recalcitrant deserved to be targeted for their parochial and obscurantist orientation sanctioned by religious tenets. Instead all the Mullahs were unequivocal in their support of the Reading Room Party which had no radical and innovative programmes on its agenda for the Muslim upliftment except that of widening and deepening the sphere of communal conflict and strife in fulfilment of the assigned task.

The basic reality that Bazaz has missed and might be that he has wilfully connived at it is the British intrigue hatched with the active aid of Muslim agents affiliated with the Reading Room Party for putting the Maharaja in a strait-jacket and simultaneously punishing the Pandits for their anti-British sentiments. The sudden act of pulling out a rabbit (Qadeer) from the hat of intriguers on the mosque site should have set Bazaz athinking about the conspiracy that the Britishers in tandem with the local Muslim leadership drawn into their dragnet were unravelling with a view to removing the Maharaja for the direct take over of his state. Riots were not the handiwork of goondas, but were deliberately and warily engineered and were a fall-out of a well co-ordinated, systematic and carefully crafted endeavour to destabilise the state and also not the result of mass discontent as there were no concrete and well-defined political and economic issues involved. If there was discontent among the Muslims, the Bengali and Punjabi Muslims ruling roost in the state by holding key-slots in the state services could have been the targets of their fury. But leaving them comfortable and unharmed in their ivory towers, the Kashmiri Pandits as a target group since the advent of

Islam were looted, marauded and murdered with ferocious vengeance.

The Muslim vested interests as represented by Khwaja Saduddin Shawl, Syed Hussian Jalali, Kwaja Shahabuddin et al known as the Rayeesani Kashmir were not looted and marauded. Was it because they were Muslims? Most of them as the drones and exploiters of Muslims hobnobbed with Maharaja and lived off his crumbs and enjoyed his munificence and benevolence and owned huge landed properties and had enormous wealth and riches. Sheikh Abdullah as buttressed by a panoply of evidence had struck back-room deals with them and were his political patrons and allies and it was under their patronage and guidance that he set up and perfected the precedent and practice of overlaying mundane politics with religion for communal mobilisations and riots.

P. N. Bazaz has pandered the Muslim tactics of levelling accusations and floating canards against the Pandits whenever Muslims are up for a revolt or insurgency or Jihad. Being in the thick of Kashmir Politics he should have evaluated the pros and cons of Hindu-Muslim tension that had gripped Kashmir way back in 1910. The petition that was submitted to Maharaja on 18th September, 1910 underscored the general rumour that the valley Muslims had a malicious intention of plundering Hindus on the same pattern as the Shias were looted and ravaged in 1872-73 in the wake of Maharaja's departure for Jammu. The factors motivating Muslims to loot and plunder Hindus have been more religious than economic.

Summing up the communalism leading to the loot and plunder of Kashmiri Pandits and other Hindus U.K. Zutshi writes, "The primary task of the leaders of 1931 agitation including Sheikh Abdullah was to seek the acceptance of the long standing Muslim demand of proportional representation in state services. This was a communal demand and had to be necessarily sought from a sectional platform. The demand was clearly informed by the communal ideol-

ogy. The nature of the demand and the ideology in which it was clothed leads to the conclusion that the agitation in 1931 was communal in character. Since it was the communal forces that mobilised the masses and invoked their support against the Maharaja's government the mass political awakening came to be enveloped by a communal ideology and was inevitably accompanied by communal discord."¹⁴⁰

Drawing an unadorned picture of the happenings of 13th July, 1931 loot and plunder of Hindus, G.S.Raghvan writes, "From Bohrikadal to Ali-Kadal—a long stretch—the Hindu shops were raided. Other localities such as Safakadal, Ganjikhud, and Nawakadal too formed the centres of loot. Bazar streets were littered with property, books of accounts were burnt; the Hindu shop-keepers were molested, in short, pandemonium prevailed. The Hindu merchants lost lakhs worth of goods."¹⁴¹

He further writes, "The most extra-ordinary portion of the story was that, almost simultaneously with the happenings at Srinagar, there was an uprising at a place named Vicharnag, some 5 to 6 miles away. It has been stated that untold atrocities were committed there; men owning lakhs were reduced to indigence and women were subjected to the worst possible cruelties and the most indecent assaults. A military force was despatched to the place, but by the time the havoc had been completed. Elsewhere the Hindus were the victims of ambushade. Some lost their lives and many suffered physical injuries. Stray assaults continued till long after."¹⁴²

He continues, "It is true that the unspeakable atrocities of July were visited on the Hindus, robbing women of honour. subjecting children to assaults and reducing the wealthy to penury."¹⁴³

A report was carried by the Tribune about the loot and murder of Kashmiri Hindus in its issue date-lined 18th July, 1931. The report reads as under:-

THE KASHMIR RIOT

Harrowing Scenes

SCHOOL BOYS HURLED INTO RIVER

(Special to the "Tribune")

Srinagar July 14

Kashmir had hardly recovered from the shock of the floods, when it witnessed an orgy of communal rioting, which was unprecedented in the modern history of Kashmir. The authorities had decided to conduct the trial for sedition of Abdul Qadir, a cook of European, in the Central Jail, because owing to mischievous propaganda disorder was feared. Accordingly all the Magistrates, including the Governor of Kashmir, had gone over to the Jail and all the courts in the city were automatically closed.

POLICE ATTACKED

At noon about a thousand Muslims gathered outside the Central Jail and there in defiance of the law arranged a meeting. The Police Superintendent ordered them to disperse but they refused. The Superintendent next ordered his constables to disperse the unlawful assembly. He had hardly given these orders when the mob which had swelled into thousands charged the small police force present with brickbats. The mob, inspite of police resistance, broke open the Jail gate and set a barrack on fire. The small prison guard fired and a few Mohammadans died. About ten deaths are reported. A short time later cavalry Police and military force arrived. Alarm bugle was sounded.

RIOTING IN CITY

Wild rumours spread in the city. The Muslims had already been observing a complete hartal since the morning but now the Hindu shops are closed. The mischief - mongers, realising that all the forces, were centred round the Central Jail, a place 3 miles away from the city, decided upon raid-

ing the houses and shops of the Hindus in the city. There seemed to be a well-organised conspiracy behind all this. The telephone and electric wires were cut off, and about six thousand Mohammadans raided Maharaja Gunj, looting and plundering the Hindus of the vicinity. Then followed harrowing scenes of incendiarism. No military or police aid reached those quarters for full two hours during which hundreds of Hindus had been looted and hundreds of them were injured with lathis and stones and incalculable damage was caused to Hindu property. Visitors were also not spared, they were severely belaboured, and every thing, even their shoes and turbans, were removed from their persons. Cars and buses were stoned and smashed. When the military and police force did arrive, it found the mob beyond control; and it was not before 7 in the evening that the havoc abated. Children, while returning from their schools, are reported to have been picked up and hurled in the river Jehlum. Hindu women were insulted and maltreated. The Magistrates, military soldiers and police constables were stoned and many got wounded. State buses carrying the soldiers were also stoned and drivers wounded. The police had to open fire at Maharaja Gunj also. A few casualties are reported among Mohammadans. But inspite of all this the mob did not disperse and continued looting and wandering.

ORDER RESTORED

At last order was restored by energetic action of the State forces. Among the 15 deaths reported so far due to police firing almost all are Muslims. Many Hindus, including women are missing. In the night curfew order and section 144 were promulgated. They are still in force in the city. Services of more military have been requisitioned, The city is observing a complete hartal. Panic prevails. In Amerakadal the Hindu shops are open. Military and police are patrolling the city. All business is at a stand still. Colleges, schools, courts and offices remain closed. Except for

the General Post-office all other post - offices are also closed. About 150 arrests have been made so far. House searches are being made to recover looted property. Unconfirmed reports of looting, plundering and belabouring of Hindus have also been received from Vicharnag.

25 LOOT OF LANDED PROPERTIES

The National Conference having risen from the debris of Reading Room Party and Muslim conference continued with its Anti-Kashmiri Pandit campaign and thrust culminating in the loot of landed properties which in most of the cases were purchased by the owners with the moneys raised from the sale of ornaments and other precious possessions. A Land Reforms committee with a Hindu careerist as its fulcrum, a mere matriculate, granted extension upon extension,¹⁴⁴ to sanctify the loot, was appointed in April, 1948 with the patent mandate of drafting a full-scale reforms programme for the transfer of land to the tillers after the abolition of big landed estates. The land reforms considered as a means to the betterment of the lot of peasantry could not be rationally opposed, but how shoddily they were scribbled, much less drafted and hastily implemented betrayed bias and vengeance. The Land Reforms committee was not membered and led by eminent experts and reputed economists who could have drawn a fool-proof reforms programme in accordance with the principles of fairness and equity. The vision and perspective of its members was so limited and circumscribed that all available contemporary models perfected only after proper experimentation were neither studied nor cognised for effective guidance and subsequent implementation. The Soviet-type co-operative and collective farms failed to inspire the committee members though land reforms considered vital to the processes of socio-economic transformation were upheld by the communists who had played a key-role in drafting the New Kashmir document. The manner land reforms

were executed convinced all and sundry that it was a virtual loot perpetrated on the Kashmiri Pandits.

The local National Conference leaders and activists, mostly political lumpens, in unison with the designated revenue authorities at district and village level worked out the pre-determined *mala-fide* objective of dispossessing the Pandits of their meagre landed properties. Wrath and fury unprecedented in scale was generated against them as they had been cunningly projected as the only section possessing landed properties. The names of Hindu landlords who were only two in number were frequently projected as the exploiters and blood-suckers to solidify the ranks of Muslims on religious grounds for nefarious political objectives. Ahmad Mir and Musmat Ashraf Begum possessing 4,202 kanals of land and 3,915 kanals of land respectively were never projected on the public mindscape because of the religion they espoused. Two Muslim shrines of Baba Reshi and Dastagir Sahib had a land grant of ten thousand kanals which are said to have been partially snatched away perhaps again on religious considerations. Despite the Hindu ruler, there was no Hindu shrine which had in its possession the same measure of land to augment and supplement its resources. Land reforms at the grass-root level were craftily used as a ploy to sharpen the cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims.

Lands were looted and usurped by the Muslims when the Kashmiri Pandits were bereft of constitutional guarantees and safeguards as the people of India had yet to draft and adopt a constitution with a list of fundamental rights and duties. Even the state had yet to give a constitution unto itself with a view to creating a state within the state. The Kashmiri Pandits were not aliens, but bonafide citizens of the state of India and before a loot was perpetrated on them, they had every right to defend themselves against such a cruel atrocity. Sheikh Abdullah as the head of an Emergency Administration and Interim government drawing executive authority only from the ruler whom he de-

tested the most hastily embarked upon the infliction of the loot on the Pandits who as per Islamic tenets could not own land and were maligned for owning even small holdings of land and hence spurred by the same motivation could not be spared from the sharp scissors of the land reforms. At the behest of Britishers and communal elements operating from Lahore and elsewhere he had waged a sectarian battle against the Maharaja ostensibly to instal a responsible government, which under clear-cut enunciations underlines a government responsible to the legislature comprising the elected members on the basis of adult franchise. Was there any legislature when the processes of land grabbing were given a push up? Was there a supervening constitution sanctified under a due democratic process that would have invested the citizens with justiciable rights flowing from it? The state of Jammu and Kashmir despite its accession to the nascent dominion of India had yet to constitute itself as an integral part of the union in accordance with the requirements of a modern nation - state.

Sheikh Abdullah committed a fraud on the Hindus when he made open declarations about the impending land reforms from the pulpit of National Conference much before the reforms were formulated and enacted as law.¹⁴⁵ The Muslim landlords taking the cue and already aware of the dates for the enactment of land reforms, to be exact, tipped off in advance, entered into quick negotiations with their Muslim tenants and showed the lands under self-cultivation or distributed the lands beyond the stipulated ceiling among their family members. The Hindu landlords were at a definite disadvantage as they could not exploit the religious sentiments the same way as Muslims could. It was construed as a deliberate move revealing a design to save the Muslim landlords from the clutches of arbitrary land reforms, which were pushed against the Pandits right from 1947. The arbitrariness of the act was sanctified in a

vengeful and brazen manner by adding a sub-clause to the Act when the constituent Assembly was constituted in 1951.

The Hindus for the fact that they were Hindus and Kafirs at war were not paid any compensation when tracts of land were snatched away and grabbed from them despotically and arbitrarily. The Land Compensation Committee was conceived and set up as an eye-wash and a hoax and in utter dis-regard of material grounds and facts it upheld the arbitrary executive fiat and unjustly fortified the fraud that was committed on the land -owners by the Interim Government in the name of so-called socio-economic reconstruction. As per the report of the said-committee. "To support compensation to such persons will be like telling the tillers that though they morally owned the land, they must buy it from those 'who did not morally own it' ". What does 'morally owned the land' mean? what does 'who did not morally own it' mean? The National Conference was ethnically cleansing a community by snatching away its main succour and sustenance without allowing and opening up other channels for its survival and rehabilitation and compensation committee was vying with morals and quoting scriptures when what it was sanctifying, upholding and contributing to was stark violation of all norms of ethics and its genuine tenets.

To possess land in terms of law means to own land and as is amply known possession is three-fourths of law. The land was in actual possession of landholders who after due processes of revenue settlement and verification legitimately conducted from time to time were enlisted as assamis by W.R. Lawrence and invested with ownership rights with powers to sell and mortgage by B.J. Glancy and therefore not only deserved compensation but had to be compensated as dictated by law for the losses they were incurring when lands were in the processes of being snatched away for distribution among Muslims. But law

was perverted and subverted with all cussedness and it has been so in Kashmir since 1947.

The compensation committee has recorded in acknowledgement that there were some proprietors who had purchased their tracts of land very recently, but despite it, they were not shown consideration and mercy and were brushed off their purchased properties with the same prejudice and vengeance. The committee has also recorded that they had made huge profits from the landed property which they had purchased and hence in view of it they could not be paid compensation. What a logic? The committee labouring under severe communal prejudice failed to learn from the basic principle of commerce that properties are made, held and purchased with a view to making profits. The committee virtually played the proverbial wolf and lamb with the Pandits owning small tracts of land known as 'Chaks'. The orchardists were not dispossessed on one pretext or the other as the Pandits were nor were their orchards put to a ceiling because they are mostly Muslims and they are known world over for having made profits worth crores and having amassed amazing assets and properties.

Records R.K.Bharti, "The Land is taken without compensation when Hindus are involved.

When Muslim novo-rich (VIPs) are involved the Act has taken care of them by providing 'prevalent market rates' under schedule-III Part B of the Act.¹⁴⁶

Intriguing as it is huge orchards owned by the Muslim rich have not been brought within the purview of land reforms. The Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972 as a satanic act had exempted the orchards laid out before 1971 from a ceiling limit, but had prescribed and stipulated for a ceiling limit for the orchards laid out and cultivated after 1971. Why were orchards laid out prior to 1971 put beyond the purview of a ceiling limit? Why were orchards laid out after 1971 put to a ceiling limit? There was apparently no

logical or even reasonable basis for the said-stipulations, but all these stipulations smacked of communal considerations and motivations. The Muslims had already laid out orchards which needed protection and legitimacy and the Act provided such protection and legitimacy by incorporating illogical and meaningless provisions. And Mir Qasim was the architect of these reforms with brimming communal content in them.

Sheikh Abdullah in the wake of his take-over in 1975 as Chief Minister of the state caused the Act to be amended in post-haste with a view to putting the orchards beyond any prescribed limit thus affording lavish patronage and leverage both political and economic to the apple-sheikhs whose orchards endlessly sprawl over acres upon acres of land with no perceptible curbs to their proliferation. It is believed that the Sheikh and his close relatives owning huge orchards in the valley have vitalised and fortified their interests in land against any onslaught in the form of setting a ceiling limit to their proliferation.¹⁴⁷

The orchard syndrome in reality reflects the creation of 'Kulaks' who enjoy tremendous levels of opulence and prosperity at the expense of that segment of rural poor who were left out and not considered with seriousness for allotment of land the time lands were snatched away ostensibly for distribution among the landless. As the apple-sheikhs are rolling in enormous riches, there is a proclivity fast proliferating to convert the cultivable lands though illegal into orchards and governments of varied brands infiltrated and throttled by the Kulaks have as a matter of design stifled any attempt to thwart the tendency of formulating and undertaking legal measures and introducing a ceiling limit as a matter of prime importance for orchards as well. Kashmiri Pandits as victims to Muslim-tyranny suffered the main thrust of the so-called land reforms and thus have been illegally deprived of their landed properties by blocking all channels of redressal. But, now, when it is the Muslim Kulak at the land site, the politicals

of all hues and shades communally motivated garner and perpetuate his interests and hence there is no necessity felt to frame committees upon committees to formulate dubious plans to trim and clip his wings from further forages into the agricultural lands.

Comments D.N.Dhar."..... that Sheikh Abdullah had a tendency towards the development of Kulak economy in the rural side. It may be appropriate to mention here that during his tenure of office, there were no leftist elements either in his ministry or in the organisation. In fact, he had developed abhorrence for such elements. He did not even refer too often to the New Kashmir programme and his commitment to it."¹⁴⁸

Had land reforms been conceived honestly without communal bias these should have benefited and shown concern for that section of the ruralites which was landless and therefore economically bereft and at bottom line and wallowing in absolute poverty and deprivation. As is well-known the reforms as such were no longer a boon for the landless poor who as per a random estimate are no fewer than 30,000 in number and are obliged to migrate to the heat and dust of plains for earning a pittance.

Why was not surplus land acquired by the government of Sheikh Abdullah from the big landlords by the abolition of their estates distributed among the landless labourers on a priority basis? How was it that despite their abominable conditions and bottom-line penury they were totally ignored and shown indifference and jibing contempt? They as the real rural poor should have been the first to be the beneficiaries of the reforms which the fact remains were executed without cogent planning and fixation of primary priorities.

Records D.N. Dhar, "Despite the fact that land reforms had led to enormous disparities in incomes in the rural side and had created a big void between the rich and the poor, it had led to general prosperity and affluence. The fruits of this prosperity could have been fairly enjoyed by all sec-

tions of the village community, had not the creation of Kulaks led to the depriving of a large section of rural population from sharing good proportion of the land thus taken away from the landlords.”¹⁴⁹

The Muslim novo-rich, ruling elite, M.L.As, M.Ps, Government Officers, Judges and Tehsildars et al owning enormous landed properties are a new class of Kulaks who do not cultivate the land themselves as full-time occupation, but employ cheap wage labour from Bihar and West Bengal. As per the Act the essential condition for ownership of land presumably is that the proprietor in fulfilment of his title has to till the land himself, but this new class of Kulaks having taken to multiform trades and varied jobs is proliferating at a fast and furious rate and continues to own land in fact and law. Various Acts passed under different shades of governments have straightaway left out the Muslim Kulaks as immune for the fact that they are Muslims and their interests are supreme and as a matter of concerted state policy have to be garnered and safe guarded.

Discriminatory as it is, as per the Agrarian Reforms Act of 1976 the Kashmiri Pandits though allowed resumption of land for bonafide cultivation have been mischievously put to the rigorous condition of proving their residence at the land site and are said to be required to personally take to tillage in the villages where lands are sought to be resumed. There are a host of other inhibiting conditions which the Pandits are required to fulfil before they are allowed actual resumption. But the Muslim Kulaks continue to enjoy fair share of prosperity without any intervention from government sponsored stipulations and measures.

The Land Reforms Committee, a puppet created under an executive fiat, fixed an individual as a unit of cultivation, not a family. This fundamental absurdity and irrationality was not a freak, but a deliberate piece of design to enable the Muslim tenants, who already had their own tracts of

land, to have big estates comparable to the ones possessed by Chakdars. The head of a family with five sons (Muslims have yet to accept family planning) was entitled to own as much of land as was permitted within the ceiling limit and his five sons could hold the same measure of land individually and thus the family could possess a sizeable land holding. Then, again, the six members of the same family could possess and own exempted lands again on an individual basis. It will not be off course to say that the deliberate act of presuming and establishing an individual as a unit of cultivation led to the creation and proliferation of a class of peasants who are prosperous and affluent at the expense of landless labour left uncared for and high and dry.

There are examples galore that pinpoint to the unscientific character and sheer worthlessness of the entire exercise of land reforms. Land belonging to a Hindu widow completely dependent on it for succour was grabbed and given to an apple-sheikh. A Hindu land-owner who had retired and was living on a meagre pension lost his lands to a Muslim millionaire. A land holder was a petty school teacher whose land was snatched and transferred to a Muslim gazetted officer flaunting pomp and riches. The lands belonging to the deaf and dumb, morons, mental degenerates, physically disabled, cripples and handicapped—all Kashmiri Pandits, were grabbed and transferred to apple-sheikhs, businessmen and affluent sections of Muslims with assets enormous and unlimited.

The Hindus and Sikhs were virtually put on the hit-list of the government and as a result of the hate campaign unleashed against them the revenue authorities in collaboration with the National Conference lumpens and communist ideologues subjected them to the worst brand of intimidation and tyranny much before the enactment of land reforms as law. Revenue records which were kept and maintained flawlessly were suddenly tampered with, manipulated, mutilated and erased. Frauds committed were unscrupulous and base. Manipulations devised were shame-

less and communally motivated. Revenue authorities expected to be just and objective became law unto themselves and working out behests from the powers that be flouted legal procedures and practices in all vengefulness. Harassment and intimidation of a Pandit or a Sikh was not a matter of aberration, but an over-riding rule. In fact, rule of law was replaced by the rule of Jungle.

There was a startling precedent set by a Muslim Tehsildar in Baramulla who without rhyme or reason yelled 'Hindu-Muslim-Itihad-Zindabad' and took up his blind pen and transferred the lands of a Sikh to a Muslim sitting in his revenue court. Having learnt about the atrocity, the Sikh despite his fighting spirits and bravado meekly and helplessly filed an appeal to the same maverick officer, who was never reprimanded and disciplined for the despotic act he had committed, instead earned accolades and praises qalore from the powers that be. There was yet another example signalling collapse of law set by the Muslim hordes who intruded into the orchards of a Sikh residing at Badgam and chopped off all the fruit-bearing trees in one go and had the audacity to claim the land under their tenancy and astonishingly the revenue authorities without any qualms and queries registered the mutations in the name of Muslim plunderers thereby legalising the entire brutality and encroachment. As the orchards are not subject to a ceiling limit courtesy Sheikh Abdullah's Agrarian Reforms Act of 1976, the cultivators exploiting religious sentiments and deeply conscious of the flight of law and its enforcement agencies transformed agricultural lands into orchards and the revenue authorities, mostly Muslims, abetted and connived at the blatant outrage and defiance of law.

Mirza Afzal Beg who was the Revenue Minister and headed the Land Reforms Committee was a ruralite and was believed to own large tracts of land, but people maintain that he alongwith his close kins enjoyed absolute immunity from the scalpel of land reforms. Ghulam Hassan

Malik, a relation of Afzal Beg and one-time M.L.A. from Devasar, District Anantnag was a well-known landlord, but as per the statements of the natives of his village he continued to lord over his huge estate as Afzal Beg in lieu of his switch over to National Conference from Yusuf Shah's camp is said to have immunised him against the virus of land reforms and its attendant damage by tipping him off in advance about the dates when land would be grabbed from Hindus by an enactment. The family of Razdans residing at Salia, District Anantnag had out of prudence or foresight distributed the lands under their possession among natural heirs much before loot was perpetrated on the Pandits, but Afzal Beg with his known credentials bearing personal grudge and animosity against the family was said to have caused the mutations cancelled albeit their registration by competent revenue authorities under due process of law.

Mir Qasim whose studies at Aligarh Muslim University were financed by Hindu Communists had learnt many a lesson in communal politics in his capacity as Private Secretary to Afzal Beg. Being vengeful and communally motivated he did not rest content with the abolition of big landed estates, but engineered the total erosion of the rural base of Kashmiri Pandits through the Agrarian Reforms Act of 1972 delineating the most irrational and unjust provisions for compensation to the landowners thereby ending their aeons-old tryst with land which they legally owned. The categorisation of land masses accordant with a number of factors was not scientifically carried out and despite its shoddiness did not contribute to the fixation of reasonable prices for the said—lands. A kanal of land categorised as the best in terms of productivity, situation, and soil chemistry was priced at a mockingly low sum of one thousand rupees when its actual existing market rate ranged from 5 to 10 lakhs. The other grades of land as per their quality, location and irrigational network were priced for a trice. The tenant as per the black Act selling the same

land could sell it at existing market rates. As stipulated in the black Act, the compensation to be paid to the owner was fixed in proportion to the share of produce that the owner was coerced to accept under tyrannical regimes. The compensation for a measure of land if acquired by government in public interest was to be paid not to the owner but to the tiller who is a Muslim. The plethora of measures as enunciated in the black Act of 1972 were biased and communal in intent and substance and to the knowledge of all were contrived to the sinister end of grabbing land from Pandits for transfer to the Muslims.

As per the provisions of the black Act, the Pandits were bereft of their share of produce and their tillers were directed to deposit the said-share of produce with the revenue authorities designated for the purpose who in turn would manage the transmission of it to the owner either in cash or in kind. It did not take Pandits much time to sense the conspiracy that was hatched at governmental level to uproot them from their rural ambience and end their age-old love-affair with the lands that they had legally purchased. Despite all forms of lawful protests including submission of representations and memoranda, the Mir Qasim government with an open nexus with fundamentalist forces sponsored by Jamaat-i-Islami proved apathetic and unresponsive and that was how Kashmiri Pandits formed village level committees to fight back the provisions of the black Act conceived to ethnically cleanse them.

Trilochan Dutt, the then Revenue Minister, who had tremendous history in politics, failed to prove smart and nifty to smell the communal tilt discernibly prominent in the black Act and despite pleadings and complaints from the Pandits he prevaricated on an issue that was of prime importance for them as their fate in their natural habitat was being sealed by the very Congress government he formed a part of. On his official visit to Hanand Chawalgam, District Anantnag, he had to face an avalanche of fury unleashed by Kashmiri Pandits determined to wage

a do or die battle against the communal government of Mir Qasim. Pandits in swarming numbers from the nearby and distant villages turned up to plead with the Minister for annulment of the satanic Act as it had driven a last nail into their coffin. To the surprise of all, a Kashmiri Pandit granny suddenly appeared on the scene and tearing through the thick crowds, she in all her fury slapped the Minister in his face and weeping and wailing yelled that she had not eaten for the last four days. In his utter consternation, sensing more trouble, the Minister beat a retreat into the Rest House and chased by the violent mob he entered the bath-room for refuge where he was said to have suffered the wrath of giant sized bees and drones and the police posse standing by for the security of the Minister maintained cool otherwise a bullet if fired would have resulted in a blood-bath. The Minister buzzed off the scene quietly. This was the first ever resistance that the Pandits registered against the so-called land reforms.

The violent incident sent shock waves into the government circles and the family of Mir Qasim. As a result the government already in the lap of communal forces proved stiffer than the stiff and continued with its policy of landing the Pandits into dire straits. Sayyid Hussian, brother of Mir Qasim, propping himself up on his cretches, yelled his lungs out to tell and exhort the Muslims to bury the Pandits alive if they dared ask for their share of produce. Sayyid Hussain, a non-entity, who had entered politics courtesy Mir Qasim, was taught by a Kashmiri Pandit languishing in poverty and deprivation. How could Mir Qasim maintain silence when his brother had already thundered against the Pandits? He asked the native Hindus to march out of Kashmir and 10-feet wide road was all open for them. Mir Qasim's fiat to the Pandits was a pointer to the agenda that the ruthless Muslim bigotry in all vengeance had framed for them through the "twenty humiliating conditions"

stipulating their total and ruthless annihilation if they dare flout any of the conditions imposed on them in a state ruled by Muslims.

Daniel Thorner on Land Reforms

Daniel Thorner, a die-hard French Communist, who paid a visit to Kashmir during the period land reforms were implemented and enacted has the following remarks:-

“From 1948 to 1950 propaganda warfare between pro and anti-Pakistan elements was acute. Faced with what looked like an imminent plebiscite on the question of possible accession to Pakistan Sheikh Abdullah was not wholly confident of support they could muster among the peasantry. To capture the imagination of peasants, to take their minds off the external issue of Pakistan and redeem the National Conference’s old promises of far-reaching land reforms Sheikh Abdullah’s regime in 1950 rushed through the drastic Act.”¹⁵⁰

He adds, “The basic machinery for enforcing the Act was to be the notorious crowd of Kashmir Revenue Department dating back to the regime of Maharaja. The machinery was utilised because there was no other in existence and because National Conference motivated by the special sense of urgency arising from the plebiscite issue felt it lacked time in which to create an alternative enforcement agency. The National Conference Government did not entrust enforcement solely to the officers of the Revenue Department, but was associated with them at the village level some of the conference’s own local political leaders. The intention was for the latter to check on the acts of the former. In the actual process of implementation, however, the two elements co-operated all too well with each other at the expense of “actual tillers”.¹⁵¹

He further adds, “Land reforms in Kashmir has clearly done away with the Jagirs and has weakened the position of all the great land-lords. It has distinctly benefited those

individuals who at the village level were already the more important and substantial people. It has done the least for petty tenants and landless labourers, these two categories being the largest in the country side.”¹⁵²

Taking the wind out of the sails of publicity given to land reforms Daniel Thorner writes, “India’s most publicised land reforms cannot be said to have succeeded in improving the economic lot of the Kashmiri peasant. Whether the legislation was well conceived for this purpose remains debatable.”¹⁵³

Comments he, “In some areas it looked as though the ordinary peasant was confronted with a more formidable combination than he had faced under the rather ramshackle regime of the Maharaja.”¹⁵⁴

Sheikh Abdullah Tells Loy Handerson

Dilating on American meddling in Kashmir, D.N. Raina, an author on Kashmir, writes, “Loy Handerson, the U.S. ambassador in India, told his Secretary of State in a cable sent on September 29, 1950 that secret diplomacy was carried out over the head of the Government of India on Kashmir. During Handerson’s talks with Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar, prominent agenda was independence for Kashmir and U.S. investment therefor. To allay apprehensions of Handerson, Sheikh justified his measure of drastic land reforms by “calling it a tactical move to neutralise the radical activities of communists in the National Conference party rather than a measure of his ideological conviction.”¹⁵⁴

26 LOOT OF A KASHMIRI PANDIT GIRL

Kashmiri Pandits closed their ranks and fortified their fronts as one monolith to retrieve a Kashmiri Pandit girl, Parmeshwari by name, from the clutches of a Muslim abductor who virtually looted her as a prized booty for conversion and subsequent marriage.¹⁵⁵ Despite complaints and pleadings, the government of G.M. Sadiq trapped by the Muslim fundamentalists and Pakistani moles manning vital levers of power brazenly flouted all canons of law and natural justice and treated the entire gamut of the issue in the fashion as was expected of Muslims. The Muslim police officers were in the lead-role and far from camouflaging their anti-Hindu prejudices they shifted the venue of investigations from the Police Station, Rainwawari where an FIR was lodged by the widowed mother of the abducted girl to the Police Station, Khanyar¹⁵⁶ which has been a den of Muslim bigotry and reaction. When hard pressed by the public opinion, the girl was recovered from Wazapore,¹⁵⁷ a seminary of Muslim secessionism, but as presaged was not restored to the care of her natural guardian nor was the Muslim looter charged with abduction for punishment as required and stipulated by law.¹⁵⁸

The Kashmiri Pandits with an unabated history of harassment and religious persecution rose in open revolt against the rulers who refused to see reason and motivated by religious prejudices overtly showered support and encouragement on the Muslim abductor earning total sympathy.

thies from the Muslim majority. The Muslim rulers as a matter of design kept the Pandits at bay by not associating them with the procedural complications which were deliberately created to feed and arouse the demon of Muslim bigotry. What was infuriating that the aggrieved mother of the looted girl was permitted to meet her daughter only under police surveillance.¹⁵⁹ No Kashmiri Pandit respectables were granted permission to meet the girl with a view to measuring her reactions to the situation in which she was trapped. The said-demand on part of Pandits was blatantly rejected lest the abducted girl interned in the Police Station should retract from the stand that she was doctored and coerced to take a resort to. The police officers, all Muslims, assigning Judicial powers unto themselves permitted the Muslim malefactor to take away the abducted girl ignoring the authenticity of the age-certificate issued by a competent authority establishing her credentials as a minor.¹⁶⁰ As the case was virtually settled by the Muslim police officers, the Kashmiri Pandits were naturally pushed to the wall and launched a peaceful agitation against the questionable act of the government which had approved the handing over of the abducted girl to the criminal.

Despite the soft statements of the Chief Minister, the government of the day cracked the whip of barbarity against the Pandit community, which exhibited unique will and daring to put a stop to the forcible abduction and conversion of Hindu women. The Pandits courted arrests, held dharnas and staged peaceful demonstrations to ventilate their vigorous opposition to the beetle-chewing Chief Minister, G.M.Sadiq, who had facilitated and given a push-up to the sneaking-in processes of anti-nationals and Plebiscite frontiers into the key organs of power structure.

Kashmir Police long infected of communal virus swooped on Pandits with the fury of a crusade. Indiscriminate arrests were effected, teargas shells were burst, bullets were fired and lathis were wielded to break the resist-

ing force of Pandits. Searches without proper permissions were conducted prior to the effecting of arrests. Moneys and ornaments during searches were pilfered and looted. Women on a mass scale were humiliated, reviled and molested. Peaceful protestors were brutally hit on heads and other sensitive body-parts killing them instantaneously. Acid was hurled on protesting women and children.¹⁶¹ On 25th of August, 1967 alone, two hundred and two Pandits were seriously injured when the policemen brutally charged a massive Kashmiri Pandit demonstration though peaceful.¹⁶² Many of them died from their bleeding wounds. The injured were denied medical treatment in the government-run hospitals. The funeral procession of Maharaja Krishen Razdan and Lassa Koul Badam was stoned and was said to be the handiwork of policemen in plain clothes¹⁶³ and Muslim bigots operating in tandem with the government agencies. Riots were engineered and business establishments and houses belonging to Pandits at Karan Nagar and other localities were vengefully looted, damaged and put to flames.¹⁶⁴ Two Pandits were mercilessly beaten to death. A dead body retrieved from a stinking drain was buried without ascertaining the identity of the person killed. As muslims had suddenly found a new brother in G.M.Sadiq, they let loose a reign of terror against the Pandits. Two youngmen H.N. Mattoo and Avtar Kishen Khushoo were cruelly stabbed to death. Gopi Nath Handoo was gashed in chest and head and was done to death. Nine Kashmiri Pandits were killed by the frenzied Muslims or by Police bullets and hammers.¹⁶⁵

G.M. Sadiq, the then Chief Minister, proved an utter failure to meet the thrust and strength of the Kashmiri Pandit agitation which earned tremendous support and deep sympathy from broad sections of Indian populace. He as a last resort played the time-tested card of Muslim bigotry as a counter-feint to the pressures mounted by the Pandits for handing over the abducted girl to a third party till the relevant records including the age of the victim

were thoroughly looked into. Money and liquor were generously and plentifully distributed among Muslims for their mobilisation against the Pandits and in the mobilisation campaign two ministers, Peer Qiasud-din and Noor Mohammad, and a close relative of the Chief Minister were seen in the lead-role. With a view to neutralising and debilitating the Pandit thrust, a massive Muslim demonstration was staged in Srinagar ostensibly against the utterances of Balraj Madhok who had aired the same views on Kashmir as the Chief Minister himself would harp on day in and day out. Pitting the violent Muslim bigotry against the Pandits though a micro-minority was only to silence their protest against the loot of a girl which in the eyes of Muslims was a sanctified act.

The genie of Muslim bigotry and fanaticism when aroused and let loose from its corked bottle is destined to search for its victims in Kashmiri Pandits and though the agitation was called off yet a Jihad was launched against the Pandits. Rumour mill was lubricated and a violent disinformation campaign launched to arouse the religious frenzy to an unprecedented pitch. Pandits were accused of burning a mosque at Baramulla in complicity with the security forces.¹⁶⁶ The pro-pak goons from S.P.College, Srinagar pounced on the Kashmiri Pandit students demonstrating against Miss Mahmuda Ahmad Ali Shah who was said to have hurled foul invective on the Hindu girls of her college and Kashmiri Pandit professors on staff of the college. As a part of the whole nefarious game against the Pandits fuelled by Congress government, a copy of the religious text was found cast into a filthy pond of a particular school in Srinagar and Pandits were squarely blamed for the misdeed.¹⁶⁷ Kashmiri Pandit teachers, headmasters and professors were reviled, humiliated, cursed and physically beaten. Some of them though not involved in the fury of the agitation were detained and put in jails. Muslims inured to the loot and plunder of Kashmiri Pandits subjected Hindu shops and houses at Ganpatyar and Habba

Kadal localities of Srinagar to a ruthless loot and plunder before setting them to flames. The dailies, weeklies and monthlies published by the Kashmiri Pandits and issued by the Kashmiri Pandit organisations focussing on the tidal deluge of violence and loot sweeping the Pandits were banned in a Nazi fashion with a view to gagging the community.¹⁶⁸ Pandits were maligned for having received arms from Jan Sangh rabids.¹⁶⁹ A memorandum submitted to the then Home Minister, Y.B.Chavan, by the Muslim respectables, all sponsored by the Congress bigots and Pakistani moles and saboteurs, accused the Kashmiri Pandits of stock-piling arms and ammunition in their residential houses and temples with the purpose of waging a war on the Muslim majority.¹⁷⁰ Mosques as usual were converted into centres of disinformation campaign against the Pandits. Prayer was diluted and replaced by disinformation for loot and plunder.

The then Home Minister, Y.B.Chavan, proved deft at prevarication and finally under severe pressure from Public opinion in the country paid a visit to the valley perhaps for an on-the-spot assessment of the tense communal situation that had assumed grave proportions by the Muslim intervention as was manipulated by the communalists and Pakistani subversives donning congress robes. The minister must have felt elated at the withdrawal of the peaceful agitation, but had lost everything to the stalwarts of bigotry operating at the state level to the end of ouster of the Kashmiri Pandit minority from the soil of Kashmir. The posters fiating the Pandits to quit Kashmir for its annexation to Pakistan signalled a triviality of no political import for the Minister who carried two of them to Delhi and consigned them to the dust-bin. Had he taken the cue and wrought a stitch, Kashmir would not have witnessed the euphoric rise of the demon of Muslim fundamentalism and bigotry fed by the natives and abetted by the Umma.

Rajeshwar Rao¹⁷¹ with a scintillating history in Communist politics called to Kashmir perhaps by Kashmir

Communists with a view to ingratiating themselves with the Chief Minister and his cohorts proved no better in assessing the invidious role of disruptionists, secessionists and communalists serving as the storm-troopers of the Muslims in corridors of power for stifling the Hindu protest. Enjoying government hospitality on a lavish scale, he could not but ditto to the dot the government version of the political and communal scenario that had in reality received a heavy hammering by the pursuit of the same strategy as was devised to batter and frustrate the Roti Agitation launched against the British conspiracy against the Pandits. In a statement in Srinagar he washed out what was fed to him by the Chief Minister with whom he was enjoying a fairly good rapport. His use of critical faculties which were expected to have tempered through the study of dialectical works of Marx should have normally guided him to the Pandits harbouring a genuine grouse against the Muslim rulers in particular and Muslims in general who suddenly lose rationality when a Hindu girl is lifted for conversion and nuptial knot. Had he cross-checked with Pandits and known the facts of their story, he would learnt that the Muslims manning the Police Stations initially refused to file an FIR which was lodged soon after the Kashmiri Pandit girl was abducted and when under terrific public pressure, an FIR was filed and the girl recovered, she was not handed over to her widowed mother, but to the Muslim abductor thus settling the whole issue and in contrast a Muslim girl, major by all proven evidence, was recovered from the clutches of her Hindu abductor and without any prevarication restored to the protective care of her natural parents. Incensed at this, the Hindus were more than justified to launch a peaceful agitation against the denial to them of the right of equality before law and also against the hamhanded treatment that was meted out to them by the fundamentalised law-enforcing agencies.

Had he minded an inter-action with Pandits, Rajeshwar Rao with ample grains of earthiness in him would have

come to learn as to how the vicious processes of subverting rule of law and brazenly discriminating Pandits purely on religious grounds were initiated at the state level by the Muslim rulers of all shades and persuasions and continued unabated without any let up. He would surely have felt dismayed had he known the sordid details as to how the rabid communal elements operating with unrestrained freedom with the entire Congress government at the fueling end repeated history for the Pandits subjecting them to loot, murder and arson and also as to how historical reality in Kashmir was in the processes of being tailored and re-shaped for the establishment of a Muslim ghetto at the behest of his Communist sympathiser who was perceptibly seen as the prodigal having returned to the ranks of Muslim rabids. The massive anti-Hindu demonstrations would have given him a jolt and a shock as the rabid Muslims manning the vanguard, rearguard and flanks of such demonstrations yelled out their lungs for Jihad against Hindu Kafirs for their extirpation and indulging in ruthless loot and arson of Pandit properties in broad daylight hoarsely screamed that Sadiq was a Muslim brother and that was the message they had received thus testifying to the pact that he had clandestinely formed with the Muslim bigotry, frenzied and cruel, through the mediation of Plebiscite fronters and Jamaat rabids only to push the religious enemies into an irretrievable limbo of oblivion.

As the pandits had plunged head long into the peaceful struggle, they threw off the cloak of reticence and were forthright and minced no words in drawing the attention of the Central authorities to their chequered history and to the pile of grievances that had accumulated as a result of blatant discrimination and marginalisation that the Muslim rulers feigning dubious secularism had subjected them to all through post-independence era. The Home Minister was informed in crystal - clear language that the government was assiduously pursuing the policy-path of establishing the Sunni Muslim precedence at the expense of other eth-

nic groups which in ultimate analysis would surely push the state into a jeopardy with no means to retrieve it. This stand of the Pandits was cunningly exploited and misrepresented to generate resentment against them and were accused of having abandoned and betrayed the cause of the abducted girl for seeking jobs. Slogans were raised and posters distributed at the instance of some individuals in Jammu with patronage from Dr. Karan Singh in thick cohorts with the vested interests in corridors of power and the mischievous and derisive content of the chauvinistic campaign was designed in all malafide to drift away the tremendous Hindu support to the Pandit agitation which pointedly reflected the deep-seated resentment against and dis-approval of the Muslim hegemony in the state allowed to be crafted as part of an over-all appeasement policy of anti-nationals artful in dubious politics.

Whether P.N. Bazaz was justified in his mordent opposition to the Kashmiri Pandit agitation or not, but the fact remains that he despised though in a low key the glaring discrimination that was perpetrated on Pandits by all shades of Muslim politicals motivated to perpetuate their Muslim credentials among the Muslim populace, thus throwing to the winds the constitutional guarantees ensuring rights of all segments of population transcending perspectives of caste, creed, colour or religion. The Constitution of India, to the surprise of all, has not been the political Bible of the Muslim rulers, but the Glancy Commission set up as an off-shoot of British conspiracy buttressed in later years by the Plebiscite Front Resolution has not only been the seminary of guide-lines for recruitments to public services, promotions and selections to the professional trainings, but has been the Magna Carta for Muslims who have shown it an unflinching adherence as an article of faith. The Glancy Commission capturing the texture of a time is inviolable, sacrosanct and incontrovertible even now when Jammu and Kashmir state has the supervening sovereignty of the Indian constitution with a well-defined list

of Fundamental Rights. Kashmiri Pandits as the religious "Other" have to be edged out, merit is to be scaled down, and Muslims are to be accommodated on the support-plank of Glancy Commission and "population ratio" thesis of Plebiscite Front, a secessionist outfit to the core. Merit, academic impeccability and excellence, to the Muslims, are a red rag to the bull.

Exposing the Muslim rulers who have pawned their souls to the stinking Glancy Commission, and taking the lid off the cruelties inflicted on the Pandits for ethnic cleansing, Bazaz writes :-

"Whatever justification there may have been for giving preference to Muslim candidates of inferior merit in recruitment and promotions in public services or in admission to technical and educational institutions in the past. I was a strong advocate of this as member of Glancy Commission, the time has come when the policy of discrimination should come to a stop. Those Muslim politicians who continue to insist upon its maintenance are wittingly or unwittingly accentuating communal discord. It is amazing that those who shout for complete freedom should in the same breath oppose the criterion of merit in recruitment to public services. Mark the absurdity: Muslims are most progressive and backward at one and the same time. Muslims should try to appreciate the feeling of those Pandits who are discriminated against. Political expediency might have dictated to "appease" Muslims in the past, but that argument can no longer assuage the wounded feelings of aggrieved Pandits"¹⁷²

27 LOOT and PLUNDER OF 1986

The proponents of the horror drama of 1931 in their brazen attempts to justify the macabre happenings presented the thesis of "political and economic oppression of the Muslims by the ruling class and their henchmen".¹⁷³ A social democrat keen to carve out a niche for himself in the communally polluted politics of Muslims coined the laboured justification "of the struggle in 1931 being aggressively communal in outward form, but in essence being the struggle of victimised and enslaved people against the despotic rule".¹⁷⁴ To camouflage the vicious role of local Muslim rabids, a researcher in his thesis has shifted the theatre of bigotry and belligerence from Kashmir to the Punjab tracing the motivations of horror drama to the "communal influences"¹⁷⁵ emanating from the Punjabi Muslim dispensations pursuing anti-Hindu pogrom. But the macabre drama that was enacted in Feb, 1986 in the theatre of Anantnag was shocking and flabbergasting and not only flouted, but debunked all strained interpretations that were coined and contrived about July, 1931 communal commotion ignoring the Muslim disposition of perennial lure to loot, murder and arson.

"Despotic rule," "political and economic oppression" and "victimised and enslaved people" as formulaic formulations plucked out from text-books are absolutely lacking in the potential to delineate the pathological Muslim mind that has been in hot chase of Hindu victims and finds satiation and satisfaction only after perpetrating the atrocities of loot, murder and arson on them. There was no Hindu

Maharaja who could be held accused of oppressing and tyrannising the Muslims when 1986-loot was wantonly committed on the Pandits. There were no so-called Hindu landlords who could again be held guilty of blood-sucking and exploiting the Muslim masses when in the same spree of loot Hindu properties were pillaged and put to leaping flames. There were no Pandits even at the lower rungs of government apparatus who could be stigmatised and hatefully cried foul of as representatives of the dehumanised and oppressive state machine. The limpid fact of history is that the governments of varied political formations in the wake of 1947 assiduously devised and pursued the communal plans of marginalising, eliminating and sealing the fate of Pandits in their native land and in the calendar year of 1986 Pandits stood pushed out to the peripheries of political and economic scenario of Kashmir leaving them high and dry, bereft and beleaguered. And yet an atrocious loot was inflicted on them.

The loot, pillage and arson of Feb. 1986 falls into a pattern of several such bouts of loot, plunder and arson littered over the palimpsest of Kashmir history planned and executed by Muslim bigots motivated and stuffed with the loaded lessons of bigotry and prejudice. The loot and arson that was conducted over a vaster area was vengeful, frightening and awesome, cruel and barbarous, wild and ferocious, a scene from a macabre drama, bone chilling and blood curdling. The sweep of the loot was so broad and extensive that the horror and violence of 1931-variety paled into an inconsequential event. The Pandits for no fault of theirs were the butts of target, Pandits not confined to one locality or one habitation, but Pandits inhabiting the entire landscape of District Anantnag were ruthlessly looted, ravaged and arsoned by the Muslim hordes in thick cohorts with the state power. The broad purlieux of the district were converted into a horror chamber of brutal violence, storm and rage. Like asiatic elephants the Muslims breaking loose from their tethers, violent and uproarious,

marching in waves upon waves carrying incendiary materials and sharp-edged weapons screaming Jihad cries and death to Pandits went berserk rampaging and destructing houses and temples, sheds and shops, fields and crops.

The Muslim hordes looted and pillaged nearly five hundred Kashmiri Pandit houses¹⁷⁶ and the booty acquired after vengeful loot was either kept or put to sale in open bazars. Fifty houses were burnt to cinders leaving hundreds of hapless Pandit families battered, tattered, shattered and reduced from prosperity to indigence. Women were the main butts of target and were subjected to untold cruelties and the most indecent molestations and assaults and even after the restoration of apparent peace, they fell victims to ambushade.¹⁷⁷ The stormy waves of looters on rampage in every village or hamlet were brutally clamouring for the loot of young teenage girls. Ten thousand strong horde of Muslims at Lok Bhawan, all locals, bayed for the blood of a young pretty Kashmiri Pandit girl interned in the bath-room of her house under strict instructions from her parents to immolate herself if and when their house was stormed for loot, rape and assault. Only providence could save her.¹⁷⁸ Hundreds of shops, big or small, owned by Kashmiri Pandits were plundered and looted and the owners assaulted and their shoes, turbans and blankets in the Muhta Khanian fashion removed and looted. All large scale business ventures and hotels belonging to Pandits were destroyed and portable goods broken or looted as prized booty.¹⁷⁹ It was an open and unalloyed loot of the Kafirs.

Not living down their Islamic image, in fact, adding laurels to it, the Muslim storm-troopers wielding lathis, shovels, rods and sharp-edged weapons pounced in all fury on temples and idol-houses and desecrated and ravaged sixty temples and set ablaze forty temples at one go.¹⁸⁰ Temple stones, pillars, bricks and planks lying in piles of ruin were conveniently looted for utilisation in private constructions. Such was the colossal collapse of government machinery.

Idols of Shiva, vishnu and various gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon were broken or dug out from their sanctum sanctora and hurled out in visceral contempt into ditches, rivers and flowing streams. Trees intertwined with crimson red threads worshipped with absolute devotion were cruelly felled to the absolute satisfaction of marauders. All old or newly built dharamshallas attached with temples for the convenience of pilgrims were denuded of utensils, gas cylinders, dharies and carpets and all nitty-gritty and then put to flames.

Lok Bhawan of the Rajatarangini fame was transformed into a ghastly and grisly scene when Muslims converged on the site of the temple and vandalised and broke all the precious idols with axes and iron rods. The complex had three temples and two dharamshallas which were burnt and pitilessly razed to the ground. After capturing the site the entire horde of vandalisers said Namaz within the temple precincts and in all exhilaration and exuberance went out parading the village paths and roads, abusing and cursing the Pandits, lapidating their houses and breaking windows, and window-panes and to the astonishment of goddess of sanity screaming and shouting in one chorus for the loot of Kashmiri Pandit women.¹⁸¹

As an expression of extreme hatred fresh cut head of a bull dripping blood was placed on the Shiva Linga of a temple in Bijbehara¹⁸². It did not shock the secularists anywhere. Though it was reported through all channels of media.

Muslims, in fact, were replicating the mis-deeds and frenzied acts of Muslim vandals of historical ignominy and each Pandit sunk in his colossal tragedy witnessing the devilish drama of death and destruction from the open fields where they had taken refuge and cover could not but think that they had not left them so savage when they were coerced to join the ranks of neo-converts and the journey from the temple to the mosque has been shockingly devastating and incredibly brutalising.

The demon of Muslim bigotry and hatred ruling with absoluteness over one stretch of land was batted to an enormous size by spontaneous responses all over the vale of Kashmir. Revengeful acts of loot, molestation and arson were inflicted on the Pandits wherever they had been. Temples and idol-houses were torched and Pandit houses stoned and broken into, looted and plundered. Women folk were reviled and humiliated. All the horror happenings had the same contours and the same operation. Sore as the vestibule and cesspit of Muslim bigotry and vengeance was in the lead-role of extirpating infidelity from the land of Kashmir.

The 1986-loot was sponsored and monitored by Muslims manning levers of power. The Chief Minister, G.M. Shah and the members of his family were directly involved in the loot and plunder of Kashmiri Pandits. The Jammaat-i-Islami pockets that had found nurture and sustenance from unexpected quarters were abuzz with tremendous activity in organising and planning the parameters of loot. The hordes of Muslim rabids parading in waves upon waves belonged to the villages and hamlets where Jammaat-i-Islami cadres drenched in communal venom were in tremendous strength and wielded unrestrained sway. The Congress-I and National Conference cadres as votaries of the same brand of religious fanaticism fell in line and were as wild and ferocious as the Jammaat-i-Islami cadres could be. As was corroborated from realities on ground three villages were completely ravaged, plundered and destroyed and twenty-four villages were partially effected and the broad impact of officially sponsored and generated loot and plunder was sensed in 764 villages and hamlets throughout the valley. Except Lok Bhawan and Fatehpur crowds on a looting and destroying spree came from outside. The Muslim rabids hailing from Kaimoh, Khudwani and Arwani villages as the key centres of Jammaat-i-Islami with tremendous support from all politicals owing allegiance to secular parties were discernibly

seen in lead-role to wreak havoc on Kashmiri pandits, who were psychologically devastated and realised that fear of death was deadlier than actual death.

The Muslim frenzy was generated and mobilised by setting afloat an apochryphal and malicious rumour that the Haj pilgrims and Muslims in Jammu were put to a wholesale massacre by the Hindus. That there was a well organised effort invested to oil the rumour mill got established by the fact that every nook and cranny of the valley was abuzz with and echoed the same malicious rumour. In reality, the loot and arson was organised and executed through phone-calls to the quarters that mattered especially the law-enforcing agencies. The administration not only harboured but appeared to harbour absolute sympathies with the Muslim looters and arsonists. The violent incidents of far-reaching political import pregnant with the potential to rupture peace and public order were not as a common Police practice reported at all. No appraisals were made. No concern was shown. No responses were built and organised to meet the devastating challenges from the hydra-headed monster of Muslim communalism signalling that peace and amity was a nine days' wonder. The Divisional officers disappeared from the scene in a jiffy as a deliberate act of connivance and collaboration with the looters on rampage. None would be seen visiting the affected villages with a view to re-assuring the hapless victims to the Muslim orgy of loot and arson.

Lok Bhawan much before the horrendous loot had emerged as a flash-point when the rabid Muslims operating under government patronage proffered their untenable and malicious claims to the areas of land belonging to the shrine since ages. To maintain peace and order and prevent any attempt to further widen the gulf between the contending communities, heavy deployment was made after careful appraisal and assessment of the dimensions of the entire scenario by the top Police brass. But, strangely, the armed deployment on the trouble-spot was suddenly

withdrawn at the behest of the Muslim collaborators in key positions thus granting a free rope to the marauders for perpetration of loot and destruction on the disinherited Kashmiri Pandits. Some lathi-wielding policemen practically ineffective and of no consequence to meet the highly volatile situation were seen on the spot where new records were being added to the despicable book of Muslim bigotry and garrulousness.

How was it that the villages which were directly responsible for inflicting loot on the Pandits had full flow of electric supply and the villages put to the bouts of gruesome loot and arson were steeped in darkness? Akura was steeped in total darkness. So were Fatehpur and other villages that were marauded. When a brilliant Hindu officer pointed out the design behind it, lies were fabricated, alibis coined and falsehoods dished out. It was sensed as a deliberate act of preplanning on part of divisional officers to provide cover to the vengeful ghosts and apparitions to batter their way into the Hindu habitations for loot and arson. Writes Koul, "The formidable Muslim combine forgetting their political persuasions and sinking their differences started on a looting and burning spree ravaging village after village. Political affiliations did not divide their ranks and what held them together as a solid mass for a unified action was the faith of Islam sanctioning their war on infidels(Kafirs). The Kashmirian Hindus as hapless and terrorised victims to loot, plunder and arson rang up police stations but there was no response. The entire drama of destruction and loot was stage-managed by the Muslimised bureaucracy with police as its vital cog. As a matter of design, the state authority disappeared from the scene in a jiffy and law-enforcing agencies proved a party to the loot and plunder of the Hindus. It was a rehearsal of one act of the drama of death and destruction conceived and scripted by the demon of Muslim bigotry presiding over the Muslim psyche."¹⁸³

The Indian government pooh-pooed the developments. The Minister for Internal Security who belonged to the Nehru dynasty had his own contributions to make to the destruction and dehumanisation of Pandits. The appraisal report submitted to him by L.K. Advani and Kedar Nath Sahni about the prognosis of the malicious communal developments in Kashmir with their looming threat to the security of India could not serve as his guide-lines with the result that the Kashmiri Pandits are on the cross-roads of history waiting for extinction. What was ominous that the secular parties especially Congress-I made a common cause with rabid Muslims for the loot, plunder and arson of the molecular minority of Kashmiri pandits. Cases against the looters and arsonists were not registered under the prevalent laws. Nor were they tried and punished. Law was allowed to rust on the Statute Book and it has been so in Kashmir since 1947. The Congress provincial Chief, Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, who was openly involved in the macabre events, was not arraigned before a tribunal. He was neither arrested nor tried for punishment. Jameel Ahmad Andrabi who played a rabid role in the loot of 1986-variety was not hooked and tried under provisions of law.

The Communal aggression on the Kashmiri Pandit ethno-religious minority proved of serious dimensions. It was not only a prelude to its ethnic cleansing but paved the way for the Pandit exodus to various parts of the country. A Jammu official then posted in Anantnag made it amply clear to the Union Home Minister that it was a sinister conspiracy to push out Pandits from the valley as they were deemed as obstacles in the Islamisation process that had begun in 1947. The loot and arson of Pandit properties was the boiling point of hate -Pandit campaign built up and directed by the secessionist forces drawing sustenance and unmitigated support from all brands of Muslim politicals. The Hindustan Times date-lined July 8th, 1985 reported:-

"That there was a mass exodus of the members of minority community from the state of Jammu and Kashmir

to other parts of the country. This was a dangerous trend which should be stopped. There was indeed a sinister conspiracy to throw out the non-Muslims from the valley so that the designs of complete Islamisation were fulfilled."

The statement issued out to the press by the Anantnag Prabandhak Committee in the wake of the whole-sale loot of Kashmiri Pandits reads as under:-

This Maha Shivratri has come to us with a train of sufferings, setbacks and a sad story of hundreds of our Hindu brethren rendered homeless in Vanpoh, Dhanove Bogund, Luk Bhavan and many other places, with at least twenty of our sacred temples burnt, damaged and desecrated. The sanctity of our homes in the listed towns and villages have been defiled by ruthless stoning and illegal trespass. This organised communal violence was aimed at annihilating this tiny community from the surface of our birth-place, Kashmir. The indifference and laxity of Administration was apparent. The manner in which this military-like operation was carried out speaks to indicate that preparations for this exercise were made in advance and then executed. The intelligence agencies reportedly had warned the government both Central and State about the Plan of the militant, anti-national and communal organisations bent on destabilising the communal amity of the state to further their design of secession. Reportedly the Governor had informed the Central Govt. of the dangers. It is unfortunate that New Delhi kept sleeping over the matter and the inordinate delay on their part to act in time has resulted in this holocaust. To further our doubts identification of some police and civil officials who let the situation get out of hand and even helped the plunderous has been reportedly established by the Press and the Government. The indifference and apathy of other sections of the people and their attitude of passive spectators and the deep slumber of our national leaders has placed this peace-loving community on the cross-roads of history where their very survival is at stake. The number of secular and nationalist

elements in major political parties has thinned to such a low percentage that it has become an exception. However, the minority community cannot forget the protection nationalist and secular role of some of our Muslim brothers who plunged themselves headlong to save their Hindu brother's life and property. These true Muslims shall be remembered as the torch bearer's of amity and peace. The shocking incidents the details of which follow have proved beyond doubt that the minority community in Kashmir cannot take the pledges and promises of their safety and welfare for granted.

1. Anantnag - 150 houses heavily stoned and damaged. Property of one house completely looted. One hotel ransacked and damaged. One Eye clinic looted. One Medical shop looted. Main temple Devibal and Naibasti temple damaged. Cremation shed demolished.
2. Gotamnag- One main temple - cum-Dharamshala completely burnt. Old Dharamshala damaged. Pujari seriously injured.
3. Krangsu - Pelting of stones on houses.
4. Akura- Shivalla Temple ransacked. Whole Property looted. Idols looted and broken. One cow-shed burnt. One shop looted.
5. Nanil - Two Medical shops looted.
6. Thanisher(Akura) - One house burnt.
7. Ramhall - One Cowshed burnt.
8. Brakpora - One Medical shop looted.
9. Achabal - The idols desecrated. The details cannot be printed.
10. Nowgam(Kuthar) - Temple completely burnt. Houses stoned.
11. Telwani - Temple burnt.
12. Akingam - Six shops looted. One house completely ransacked. Carpet centre looted.
13. Mohripora - One temple completely burnt. One shop looted.

14. Sagam - Twenty five houses stoned and one temple stoned. One person seriously injured.
15. Batapora (Dialgam)-One temple damaged and one house burnt.
16. Fatehpora - One temple burnt. Walling and gate ransacked and one house looted.
17. Ranbirpora Kareva - Two sheds burnt.
18. Ohpaisen - Idols desecrated.
19. Nandkisore - Idols broken and desecrated.
20. Vanpoh - Two main temples burnt. One samadhi damaged. Four shops burnt and looted. One house burnt. Two rice mills damaged. Twenty -six houses completely looted.
21. Danav Bogund - Seven houses completely burnt alongwith their house - hold effects. Two temples burnt. One Dharmshala and Library completely damaged. All the other houses but one completely looted.
22. Chowgam- One temple looted.
23. Luk Bhavan - Three temples completely burnt and mercilessly razed to the ground. Two Dharamshalas completely burnt. One shop completely looted. One house completely burnt. Murties and precious ancient idols broken into pieces.
24. Verinag- Idols of one temple in the main parikrama of spring Nilnag damaged and looted.
25. Chandian Pajjan - Temple damaged and houses stoned.
26. Sallar - Main temple in sallar alongwith ancient precious Murties destroyed. Geeta Bhawan destroyed.
27. Aishmuqam - One temple burnt.
28. Bijbehara - All the three temples looted. Idols and ancient and precious Murties broken and thrown into river. Houses stoned.
29. Gund Jaffar - One temple damaged.

DISTRICT ANANTNAG/PULWAMA

- 30. Tral -1 Kali Temple burnt
- 31. Dragpura -1 Temple burnt.

DISTRICT BARAMULLA

- 30. Baramulla - 2 temples stoned
- 33. Seer - 1 Temple attacked.
- 34. Kawpura - 2 Temples stoned.
- 35. Bandipur - 1 Temple attacked
- 36. Sopore - 2 Temples ransacked, mud thrown on idols and pictures in the temple torn.

DISTRICT SRINAGAR

- 37. Jawahar Nagar - Property of the temple burnt.
- 38. Karan Nagar -Temple ransacked and burnt. Some shops of Hindus were burnt in the Chotta Bazar, Karan Nagar area.
- 39. Ganpatyar - Temple stoned and the wall of the temple demolished.
- 40. Dashnami Akhara Budshah Chowk (Srinagar) - Small temple burnt, seat of Mehantji gutted in fire. Dharamshala and transport godown burnt to ashes.
- 41. Waskura - Property of the temple burnt.
- 42. Purshyar - Temple stoned.
- 43. Bhairav Mandir - stoned.
- 44. Nawgam (Badgam) - 1 Temple looted, 4 houses stoned.
- 45. Mazhome (Badgam) - 1 House ransacked and burnt.
- 46. Gulgam (Kupwara) - 1 Temple burnt.

NOTE : Districts of Badgam, Kupwara and Pulwama not yet Surveyed Fully.

The total loss of Anantnag district which is running into crores of rupees is being assessed properly. The details of loss of other districts are coming.

The history has struck the hour when we have to come together to devise a plan of our survival with dignity and honour. Kashmir has ceased to be a land of peace and amity. This community has to think about their collective survival in the context of indignity and out-rage perpetrated on our members in different towns and villages. The only solution that can sustain our community seems to point towards migration from this valley. Thus mass exodus of Kashmiri Hindus appears to be the only way of preserving our life and culture. This land has ceased to provide safety to our life and property and our continued living in this part of the country is fraught with the prospect of our total extinction.

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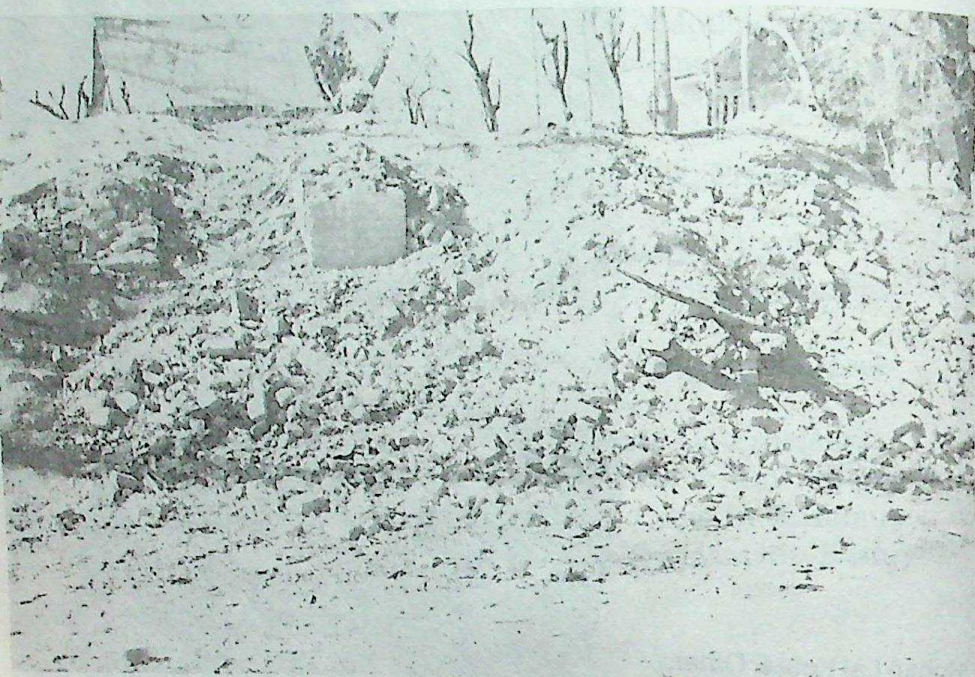
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Sadamallia Rupwala
Linga Missing

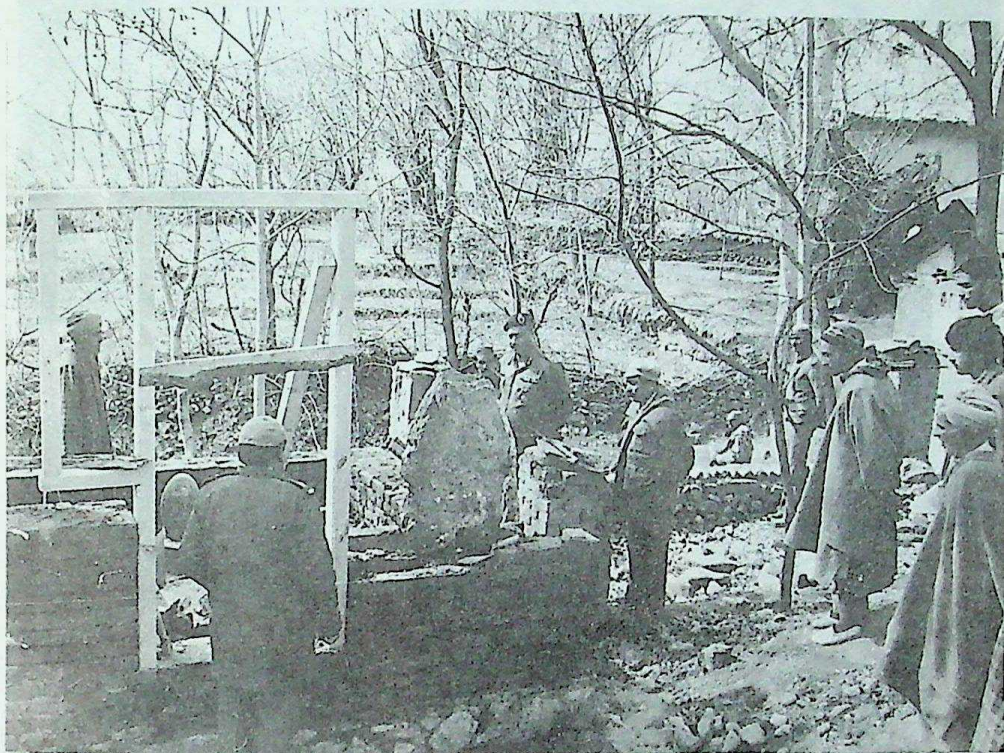


Mohan Lal Koul & Other,
Khar Bazar, Anantnag

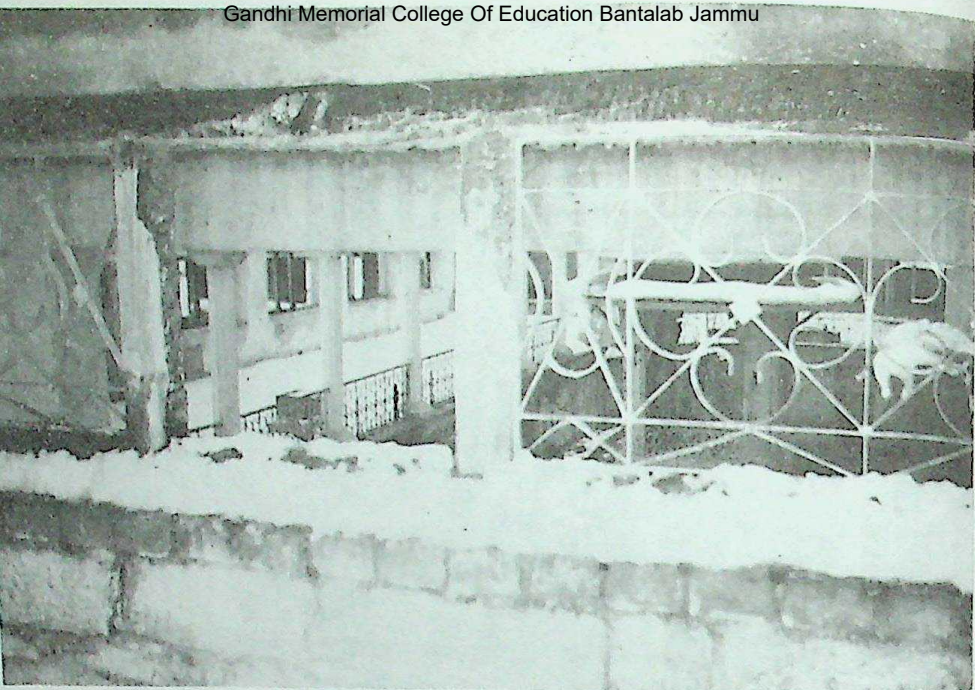




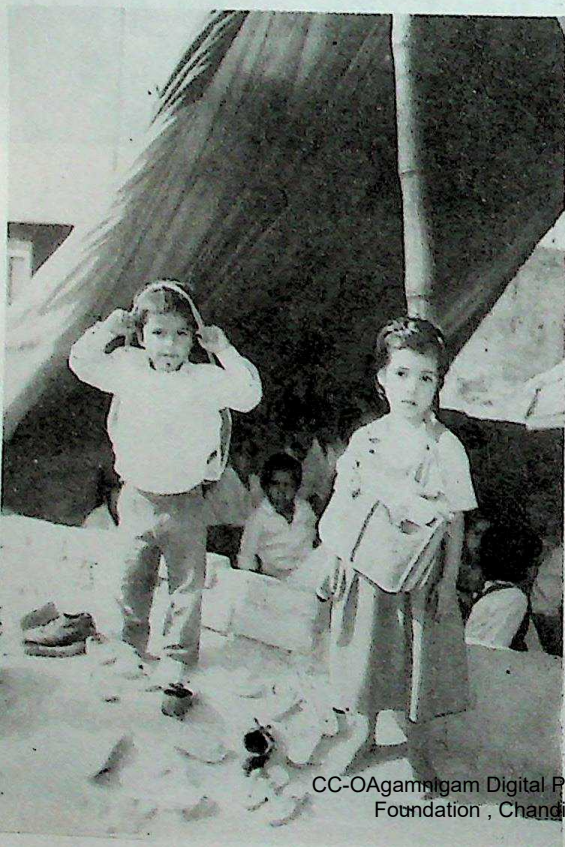
Dimolish house of
Madhav Ram Raina,
Shopian District Pulwama



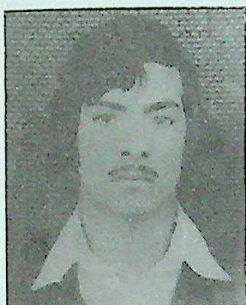
D.G. Police – 1986 Loot & Plunder



Bla. Devibal Burnt



Hopping against hope—two
K.P. Tiny Tots are determined to
continue their education.



BANSI LAL RAINA



RAMESH K. RAZDAN



CHAMAN LAL PANDITA



CHAMAN LAL TIKOO



R. N. KOUL



H. N. BHAT



ASHOK K. PANDITA



BADRI NATH KOUL



BALDEV RAJ DUTTA



VASUDEV PANDITA



DILIP SINGH



RAMESH K. RAINA



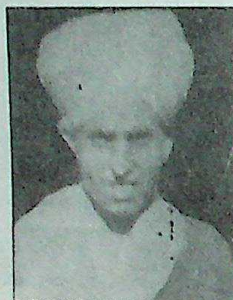
SHANKER NATH TICKOO



JAWAHAR LAL BHAT



D. N. BHAT



KESHAB NATH PANDITA



N. K. GANJOO



T. L. TAPLOO



A. K. RAINA



DURGA NATH RAFIZ



N. K. RAINA (PROFESSOR)



ANIL BHAN



P. N. BHAT (LAWYER)



D. N. MUJOO (SCHOLLAR)



PUSHKAR NATH KOUL



D. N. CHOWDHARY



CHUNI LAL SHALLA



RAMESH K. BHAT



VIRENDER KOUL



CHAMAN LAL KOUL



B. K. GANJU



PRANA GANJOO



K. L. GANJOO

Part II

1 NEHRU'S ADVICE TO THE KASHMIRI PANDITS

Pandit Nehru as the top leader of Indian Independence movement exhorted and advised the Kashmiri Pandits at a mammoth gathering at Sheetal-nath grounds to join, reinforce and strengthen the so-called nationalist forces obviously for empowerment of a culture model with its oft-betrayed perverse proclivity of maligning, persecuting, converting and liquidating non-Muslim ethnic groups. India as an ancient-land with its catholic ethos was not only a subject of discovery, but was a source material for authentic study and guidance to resolve outstanding problems and issues left over from history for purposes of shaping and mending the future political and demographical map of India with an overriding accent on its organic unity. In Kashmir Nehru's attempt was to gain that *raison detre* which he had lost in the domain of Hindu-Muslim relations. The Hindu-Muslim conflict as a sordid legacy from history with its sharpened face led to a damaging cleavage when Muslims motivated by their culture model spurning broad demands of nationalism opted for a separate homeland. What happened in Kashmir was the continuation of the same conflict under a feigned secular facade till such time Muslims would fight out the Hindu remnants in their practices and thinking contours for a fundamentalist orientation and undergo rapid economic and educational regeneration from torpid poverty and illiteracy with lavish and generous Indian fundings under a constitutionally crafted dispensation hegemonised over by Muslims deft in the art

of black-mailing and then opt out on the contrivance of the same thesis of Muslim majority complexion of the state with threats from the Hindu majority of India. That Nehru had thoroughly evaluated the religious persecution carried out to the limits of genocide in Kashmir is not buttressed by his advice to the Pandits to join the forces of treacherous nationalism which had a besmeared face of communalism and religious antagonism.

2 PAN-ISLAMIC DESIGN

The pre-dominating design of Muslim terrorism in Kashmir with its enormous contours is to snap the political and constitutional linkages with the Indian political and constitutional organisation for a tie-up with a theocratic state which has shot up into prominence as a front-line Muslim state with a fundamentalist ideology and agenda. The severance of Kashmir from the country of infidels is perceived to rectify the wrong that was committed in 1947. The Islamisation of the politico-economic structures and sub-structures of the state and doggedly pursued from 1947 with a crusading zeal have ultimately touched their apogee in violence and terrorism. The central governments of various political hues have played the proverbial ostriches or nodded tacit approval of the sinister developments in the field of separatism and fundamentalism coupled with monolithic political culture. The constitutional framework harbouring such provisos as weakened the grip over Kashmir sundered the state apart from the mainstream national and political life. With the depletion of the central authority the ruling elite and subversives in the state apparatus harnessed the levers of power in a manner inimical to the broader interests of the nation-state and created conditions in which Pak-intervention became inevitable.

The terrorist movement with all its overt and covert preparations was let loose only to snow-ball into awesome dimensions after the defeat and fiasco of Soviets in Afghanistan. It came to be seen as an inalienable part of the militarised Pan-Islamic movement chasing the goal of

Muslim expansion into new belts of territory for the establishment and consolidation of a new Muslim world for a hegemonic role. Pakistan beaming in its aura of victory in Afghanistan diverted its mobilisations from Afghanistan to the state of Jammu and Kashmir for its dismemberment from the Indian union for annexation to its domain to complete the much publicised unfinished agenda of partition and in its hot pursuit of Pan-Islamic agenda is zealously keen to fill in the vacuum in the Central Asian countries caused by the Soviet withdrawal and with that prime objective in view it is not only seeking to expanding its borders for such a role-model in Central Asia, but is bent upon making fresh inroads into the South Asian region to cobble up a defence confederacy of the Muslim countries from Middle East to South East Asia.

The fundamentalist regimes that have come to power in most of the Muslim countries have lined up in their relentless support of the terrorist movement in Kashmir. They have been funding, providing strategic guidance and launching large-scale propaganda and disinformation campaign to boost up the spirits of the terrorists. They are unanimous in looking at the Kashmir conflict as an Islamic issue which needs immediate resolution by its annexation to a Muslim fundamentalist regime determined by its Muslim majority character. The organisation of Islamic countries though internally riven has been meddling to fuel the blazing fires of insurgency by keeping Kashmir on its active agenda. Organisations and varied Islamic outfits have mushroomed in Muslim countries which not only collect huge sums in support of the Muslim terrorism, but also have launched recruitment drives for training in arms and weapons. After arming the recruits and indoctrinating them they are exported to Kashmir to feed insurgency and Jihad. Fully cognisant of the role that Pakistan has been playing in Kashmir two front-ranking Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia and Iran, in flagrant violation of international covenants have come out in open support of Muslim ter-

rorism aided and buttressed by Pakistan, in particular ISI wing of its army.

The terrorist movement in Kashmir soaked in parochialism and medieval brutalities set upon the Kashmiri pandits as the prime target with a view to smoothening the road to blakanisation of India as its primary destination. The destruction of Pandits was perceived as a vital imperative if the bridge that connects Kashmir with India was to be torpedoed. The Pandits in themselves reflected and symbolised the broad spectrum of Indian value-system and therefore had to be dealt out a death-blow for giving a burial to all that was deemed Indian to materialise the emergence of Kashmir as the undiluted land of Muslims. A systematic campaign for their liquidation was initiated and whipped up. They were put on hit-lists issued out from mosques which had emerged as the pivotal centres of terrorism. Threatening letters were written to them to add to their fear-psychosis and to scare them away and more than big-sized posters purporting the Pandits to quit or get killed were pasted on the doors of their residential houses and gates of temples. The terrorists blared out open threats to the Hindu Kafirs to clear the land of Kashmir as the star of Islam had blazed up in the skies of Kashmir. Selective killings were resorted to which ultimately turned the current and tide against the Pandits. The State government not only abdicated, but was discernibly seen collaborating with the killers. With the increase in the frequency and tempo of killings, the Kashmiri Pandits as in the past so now were left with two options of either conversion to Islam or march out of the purlieux of Kashmir for sanctuary in safer zones. The Hindu segment of Kashmiri population who formed a very stable support structure of India in Kashmir was put to killings, torture, hangings from trees, dismemberment of live bodies and gangrapes.

With the elimination of Kashmiri Pandits from the soil of Kashmir the terrorists laced with deadly weapons and equipped with training in the use of such weapons declared

war against the Indian security forces who were holding on notwithstanding the deliberate crumbling of the state security structures. The role of Kashmiri Pandits in such a war-like situation was already delineated and envisioned by Sheikh Abdullah who in unequivocal terms had dubbed the Pandits as the Indian agents. Sheikh's son, Farooq Abdullah, given to harangues against Pandits, labelled them as "unpaid agents of India." Their perceptions about the Kashmiri Pandits when translated in terms of war resulted in their death and destruction as they were deemed to form a vital and more than most dependable conduit in the communication channel providing vital clues and background information to the organs of government fighting the undeclared war launched by Pakistan in absolute collaboration with vast sections of Muslim population. The Kashmiri Pandits connected with intelligence agencies and telecommunication systems were brutally massacred and tortured with a view to herding them out to block the channels of communication. The entire vernacular press not only bent, but genuflected to kow-tow the terrorist disinformation against the Mukhbirs, the Indian agents and security forces with a view to heightening their thrust against the Indian presence in Kashmir.

Maximising the advantage accruing from the Indian failure in Kashmir, Pakistan came to hold the handle of the "Master key" in letting loose the spate of terrorist violence and mayhem. It has been responsible for the determination of the scale, goals and strategies of the on-going terrorist movement. It has set up a massive net-work of training camps for the exfiltrating Muslim youth to equip and brace them up with capabilities to use and handle arms and ammunition besides indoctrination. The key persons from the Pakistan army have been drafted to impart training to the Kashmiri Muslim youth in the use of lethal and sophisticated weaponry. The trained Muslim youth have been offered cover to re-infiltrate into the Indian positions

for operation. The war being fought in the theatre of Kashmir is led by the local Muslim terrorists whose flanks have been supported and reinforced by the quick induction of hard-core foreign mercenaries from Muslim countries. Pakistan has launched upon a world-wide campaign through its hired lobbyists to isolate India on the Kashmir conflict especially on human rights violations and in such an endeavour it is being lent moral, political and diplomatic support by the Islamic countries pursuing the same ends of militarised Islam. The Operation Topaic given high level publicity by the Indian defence experts to cover the Indian failure in Kashmir had spelt out doom of the Hindu minorities by the strategy of killing one to frighten away hundreds.

The terrorist violence in Kashmir with its calculated thrust against the Hindu minorities has been inextricably linked with and owes its allegiance to the Islamic agenda of establishing a transnational Muslim front spawning from the Mediterranean to the Malacca straits.¹ India dominantly a land of the Hindus and hence abjectly detested is perceived to put spokes in wheels of the formation and fashioning of such a front which with nuclear capabilities is deemed to pose a challenge to the supremacy of the unipolar world order. Israel hated as the arch enemy of the Muslim world has been under a constant threat and aggression of the Muslim states which have not allowed it peace and stability for religious reasons. Since partition in 1947 India has faced Islamic onslaught by the infliction of three wars with a view to destabilising it for fragmentation, chaos and anarchy. More so, the devastation of India as a nation-state which has been the leitmotif of Pakistan strategy came into sharp focus when the Sikh separatist terrorism was abetted and reinforced by the provision of modern weaponry and strategic and logistic guidance. The security scenario in the north eastern states has nose-dived and is amply vitiated by the abetment and intervention of ISI saboteurs who have been training and arming the

malcontents from the states in camps operating within Bangladesh. By heightening the separatist conflict and turmoil in the Punjab Islamists have been aiming at the destruction of northern borders for their relocation in the heartland of India.

3 SPONSORED TERRORISM

A canard of "sponsored terrorism" has been set afloat and given widest possible currency by some defence experts earning tremendous support from Government of India with a view to concealing and confusing the hard realities in Kashmir. As per the canard, the Muslim discontent actually born out of religious hatred and fanaticism culminating in total revolt against the Indian presence in Kashmir is to be attributed to Pakistan and its manoeuvres. The theory as it stands practically spells out a ruse to obfuscating the Indian failures in Kashmir and absolving the internal saboteurs wherever they be operating under varied nomenclatures dubious in intent and content. The fact remains that Pakistan militarised the Muslim revolt against India, but there were internal forces both religious and political which were to a large measure directly responsible for brewing and fermenting the revolt. It can be safely averred that violence tinged communal was not generated and unleashed because of intervention from Pakistan.² It, in reality, is and remains a part and parcel of the rubric of Islamic ethos and cultural model. There is a massive network of the Muslim organisations and outfits operating under religious cover to indoctrinate and communise the Muslim mind for establishment of a Muslim state cleansed of non-conformist religious groups. A plethora of religious schools operating under government patronage and funded by oil-rich gulf states have been igniting and fanning religious discord and hatred with a view to establishing an exclusivist culture of Islam steeped in intolerance and distrust. Right from 1947 all shades of governments not

known for their vision and initiative but harbouring commitments to parochialism and myopia have initiated the process of Islamisation which have concomitantly bred and promoted violence and unleashed the forces of separatism and extra-territorial forays and flights.³ It is Islamisation only that has poisoned and sharply cut at the roots of tolerance and mutual amity and accentuated and widened the Hindu-Muslim divide and generated violence which ultimately paved the way for ethnic cleansing.

Violence as an offshoot and expression of Muslim fanaticism, brutality and intolerance has been holding an absolute sway over the religious and political milieu of Kashmir for long and what Pakistan did was to brace up and sharpen the teeth of the violence perpetrators operating without any check or restraint in the name of Islam by lacing them with lethal arms and sophisticated weaponry. Islamisation as seen in the context of Kashmir came to broaden its horizons and sight new destinations and perspectives by establishing a linkage with the forces of religious bigotry and militarised fundamentalism in Pakistan and other Muslim countries. Religious violence vitiating and poisoning the entire scenario preceded the intervention from Pakistan and other Islamic countries. It will not be wide off the mark if it be put that insurgency in Kashmir has foreign content with an ample amount of indigenous blend.

The brutal violence perpetrated on the Kashmiri Pandit minorities in the holocaust of 1986 by the "lawless lizards" perpetually clamouring the same refrain of Islam in danger was the culmination of the entire spectrum of Islamisation which had set its sights on waging a bigger battle for redeeming Kashmir from the so-called Indian yoke and annexing it to the transnational Muslim front with commitments to a new perceived role. Violence was hurled on the miniscule minority when Zia-ul-Haq nicknamed as Zia the whip in Kashmir, suddenly died in a plane crash in his own country. Al Aqsa Mosque was reportedly desecrated and

damaged somewhere in Palestine as a result of the perennial religious discord and animosity between the Jews and the Muslims and the happening proved highly expensive for the Hindu minorities in blood and treasure. A book brought into Kashmir by a European missionary allegedly containing an imaginary photograph of the Prophet was suddenly discovered on the dusty shelves of a library and Muslims parting ways with the demands and requirements of sanity targeted the Kashmiri Hindus by hurting, maiming and cursing them and stoning their entire habitations. Pakistan lost a match or won a match and Hindus in both circumstances had to face violence, privation and suffering. Mast Gulf, a Pakistani swash-buckler, hailed and applauded by the locals as their saviour and a guest from Pakistan was responsible for putting the Chrar mausoleum to flames and Muslims established startling records as the ruthless marauders when the Hindu habitations with their left-behind properties were burnt and razed to the ground. Violence as an ingredient of Muslim pathology was only aggravated and harnessed to the hilt by Pakistan which has not reconciled to the historical reality of Jammu and Kashmir as a part of the Indian state.

Loot, arson and vandalism were an accepted ethos of Kashmir prior to the declaration of proxy war and the state governments have played an actively collaborative role to nourish and cultivate the religious forces of bigotry and prejudice working cumulatively to quench dissent, liquidate the pluralistic fabric of Kashmiri society and more than most to establish the absolute sway of Muslims over politics and economy of the state. Under the secular garb Islam has been installed as the state religion and that is how the Muslim onslaught on Hindu religious places has been finetuned into a state policy to establish ascendancy of Islam. Islamic fundamentalism has been initiated and nurtured at the state level. So has been secessionism coupled with subversion.

The twin forces of religious bigotry and separatism have been on the same wave-length and operating in tandem adding immeasurably to the steam-roller image of Islam. The state apparatus infested with die-hard subversives and moles transformed Kashmir into Nazi dominated Germany doling out the same treatment to the native Kashmiri Pandits as Jews were meted out in Germany, persecuted and liquidated. Assault upon their persons, their inherent freedoms, their constitutional guarantees and their cultural heritage was installed as a centre-stage of political and religious strategy. The cultural authoritarianism that goes with Muslim precedence, monolithic political culture and separatism has patently ordained that anything that cannot be Islamised cannot be tolerated. The state policy as devised and determined by the dominant Sunni Muslim politics⁴ has been predominantly suffused with anti-Pandit venom and animosity and resonant with decibels for threats and sword-rattling against them without any visible let up. Farooq Abdullah the maverick yelled, "Your bodies will be lying in Srinagar and your tattered clothes will reach Delhi" and he was giving last touches to the hatched Muslim conspiracy to herd out Pandits from their home-land to live the plight of refugees in their own country.

The secessionists having lost political power in 1953 not only hobnobbed with Pakistan, but were said to be in receipt of hefty sums of money from that country to feed subversion and political instability and to patronise terror groups that had been sprouting from time to time at the behest of Pakistan. Whether in or outside the corridors of power the Muslim political leadership as a matter of calculated strategy has been maintaining overt or covert contact with the ruling circles in Pakistan through Kashmiris and other contacts settled in that country who have been frequently visiting Kashmir on crucial junctures and to state the obvious has been responsible for mysterious fires and thefts, umpteen acts of subversion and sabotage designed to mobilise and garner maximum support for separatist

cause. Secessionism was fed by the top leaders of the Plebiscite Front for twenty years and when rehabilitated and handed over political power for purposes of political expediency and convenience through senseless accords and alliances, they lent credibility and sanctity to the politics of secessionism and anti-national acts and added new dimensions to it by founding a Muslim state practically outside the pale of India. It was made amply clear that their options are either independence or Pakistan and if they forego the choices, their only outstanding option is to be outside the constitutional and political organisation of India, and this is the summum *bonum* of greater autonomy.

The Central Governments have not only turned a Nelson's eye to the militarised fundamentalist developments in Kashmir, but allowed them to grow and expand in recognition of the Muslim majority complexion of the state.⁶ Compromises with the chronic Muslim secessionists and arch-votaries of independence with known links with and allegiance to the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front were stitched out for short-term political gains and goals. Print media not lagging behind made incessant projections about the Islamist forces working through Madrasas and mosques fast veering round a struggle that had Pan-Islamic motivations and character and extra-territorial dimension. The movement unleashed by Al-Jehad had been propagating and giving wide currency to the concept of "Islamic revolution"⁷ as the only path to wrest away Kashmir from the grip of the Indian Kafirs. The dominant Muslim population despite deep-seated religious rivalries and schisms could be visibly seen aflush with the Khomeini brand of Islamic revolution and the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, Mahaz-i-Azadi, the Liberation League and other separatist outfits made their debut in the political skies of Kashmir as direct off-shoot of the Islamic radicalisation and communalisation.⁸ Pakistan proved prompt and deft at constantly monitoring political developments, broadened its perspectives and set its sights on big-

ger goals. Where India lost Pakistan gained a tremendous political mileage. No tab was maintained on anti-India forces maintaining stranglehold of the government apparatus and the principal political formation within the state. Nor were political developments of far-reaching import carefully monitored. When signals were loud and clear about the growing menace of terrorism, it was flip-flopped and given a short shrift. The governor on the scene faxed "Today is late, tomorrow will be too late", but the Prime Minister immured in his ivory tower, pampered and flattered by the whizzkids surrounding him, not bitten by ground realities, consigned it to the waste-paper basket refusing to heed the signals presenting an altered scenario.

4 KASHMIRI PANDITS— SOFT TARGETS

Thousands of Muslim terrorists owing unflinching loyalty to multiform political and religious organisations including the ruling National Conference were primarily responsible for the introduction of “gun culture” in Kashmir thereby militarising the Muslim ethos already infected of communal canker. Frenzied and wild, they launched upon a systematic campaign for wiping out Kashmiri Pandits to establish an absolute Muslim sway with Islamic destinations in view. The foul statements and venomous and uncalled-for comments about the Pandits maliciously etching them on the Muslim mindscape as the agents of India were a precursor to the storm that was imminent to engulf them. The trend was set when they were put to sporadic killings and their properties torched and looted. The government authorities overtaken by communal motivations and prejudices pooh-poohed the stygian and murky developments with the result that the state as per the premeditated design lurched into an abysmal disaster and destruction.

A sadhu clad in saffron living in a temple in north of Kashmir was chopped into pieces with an axe and the sack containing his hacked body was recovered from a ditch.⁹ The gruesome killing did not cause an alarm to the deracinated rulers enjoying carnival of power and pelf. Though they were in know of the developments yet dismissed it as a stray case of mysterious murder. The Mahant of the Vicharnag shrine on the outskirts of Srinagar was brutally murdered by a constable in the em-

ploy of J&K Government when he dared spurn the offer of conversion to Islam as an alternative to his murder.¹⁰ The powers that be did not pretend to be shaken and were in high voltage jubilation as events were unfolding as per the delineated blue-print. A Pandit lady travelling in a bus in Pulwama was blatantly molested by the Muslim passengers thus pointing to the all-time low dip in Muslim rationality.¹¹ The incident though highlighted at many a forum did not send shock waves in the ranks of ruling mandarins. A Kashmiri Pandit lady in thirties serving as a staff-nurse in a government hospital was whisked away and stripped stark naked and pushed out on the highway for every passer-by to witness her humiliation and dismaying as it is the incident did not cause horror to the guardians of law and order. A bullet was shot at a Kashmiri Pandit lady killing her on the spot and in the ensuing whirlwind of confusion most of the Pandit ladies crossing the Habbakadal bridge were ruthlessly mauled and molested. It caused no tremors and law enforcing agencies completely infected and polarised felt no impetus to act to checkmate and blot out the forces that were unleashing brutalities reminiscent of medievalism. A Kashmiri Pandit in budding youth was killed by a Muslim killer in broad daylight and the authorities hush-hushed the whole case and posed the killer as an insane despite his confession that he was paid money to kill any Pandit who came his way.¹² A notorious brigand acting as a muscleman of the powers that be killed a Pandit by forcibly barging into his house and striking his head with a brick and the police prevaricated for long before an FIR could be registered. And the progeny of the person murdered were forced to withdraw the case.

The properties of Kashmiri Pandits were being plundered and set afire and the ruling elite as part of the whole design never moved in the direction of undertaking pre-emptive measure. A residential house belonging to a Kashmiri Pandit at Saraibal in Kashmir was burnt to ashes and the government appeared sunk in a pathetic state of

inactivity.¹³ The shop of a Pandit situated on the ever-busy court-road in Srinagar was looted in daylight and the police posse present on the scene disappeared in a jiffy.¹⁴ Most of the Hindu shops in Ganda Singh Building in Srinagar were savagely looted by the Muslim looters and the government authorities were in deep coma.¹⁵ All liquor shops belonging to Pandits were brutally looted and the government of the day never bothered to act to rein the frenzied Muslims,¹⁶ thus posing itself as a model of inertia and inaction. The non-Kashmiri Hindus who are *bonafide* state Subjects and have a history of residence in the valley were suddenly looted by the Muslim marauders on the untenable plea that they are outsiders with no inherent rights to reside and carry on businesses in Kashmir.¹⁷ Yet the government under the strangle-hold of Muslim fanatics did not feel obliged to act with force to disfigure the monster of Muslim intolerance. Strikes were fiated and demonstrations held against Darwin as his scientific theory conflicted with the Islamic concept of creation.¹⁸ The government failed to smell the rat. The institutions founded and run by the Kashmiri Pandit minority were put to bomb blasts and cruel flames of fire¹⁹ and the senseless violence that was being perpetrated on the miniscule minority did not invite a vigorous intervention from the government agencies which in reality shared deep commitments to ethnic cleansing. The supine negligence on part of the government coupled with its incredible imperviousness to the sharp and precipitous decline in communal and political scenario was deliberate to allow the proliferation and consolidation of anti-India and anti-minority sentiment and thrust to materialise the ultimate objective of disengaging Kashmir from the Indian union. The terrorists with training in arms and minds stuck in cages were operating with policy, purpose and direction and the National Conference-Congress combine led by Farooq Abdullah had commitments to withdrawal from the scene at an opportune moment leaving the field open for the terrorists to establish their full sway and writ.

5 JKLF—AN OUTFIT OF KILLERS

The advocates of secular character of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front have missed as inconsequential the Jammat-i-Islami background and orientation of the terrorists affiliated with the outfit. As finished products from the Jamaat-i-Islami-manned front organisations including Islamic Students League and Jamiat-e-Tuba they are in full agreement with the Jamaat-cadres on issues of launching Jihad, fundamentalisation of Islam and its militarisation and inveterate opposition of pluralism, dissent and secular ideology. Zia-ul-Haq and Ayatollah Khomeini harbouring fundamentalist views were proclaimed as the heroes of Islam with visions of revitalising and restructuring the Islamic movement for a dominating role in the world with its main thrust against the religious enemies. The duo as the proclaimed heroes of Islam were never the protagonists of any brand of secularism. One Islamised Pakistan and the other preached Islamic revolution with fundamentalist agenda as its guiding beacon. Pakistan and Iran to the terrorists of JKLF were the model states which could be emulated with a view to re-shaping and re-structuring Jamn.u and Kashmir accordant with the Islamic law and precedent.

Rustum ji and Ved Marwah have floated and publicised the unfounded thesis about the secular character of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front.²⁰ George Fernandes in his talk and discussion at the centre for International Affairs at Harvard university asserted the same fallacy that the JKLF was committed to the maintenance of

communal harmony and secular order in the state.²¹ Balraj Puri has found reflections of fraudulent Kashmiriyat in the JKLF.²² To the disquiet of all supporters of the phoney thesis it was Yossef Bodansky who as a putative expert on international terrorism in a seminar in New Delhi spotlighted and exposed the communal substance and motivations of JKLF and its links with rabid organisations globally.²³

It is amply known that the terrorists operating under the umbrella of JKLF have been wedded to the agenda of liberating Kashmir from the so-called servitude of India and declaring it as an independent state under an overarching suzerainty of Islamic state of Pakistan.²⁴ In its conceptual frame and ideology the outfit is no different from the Jamaat-i-Islami which is fundamentalist and parochial with deep commitments to Kashmir's annexation with Pakistan as a Muslim state. There is no denying the fact that the JKLF has no well-defined ideological contours which could have set its parameters of differentiation from diverse outfits operating the same fundamentalist agenda. It has been generally observed that the terrorists connected with groupings having rabidly communal orientation and programme have found refuge and patronage in the JKLF and have operated under its aegis.²⁵ What brings the JKLF terrorists at par with other terrorist groupings is the fundamentalist agenda of Pan-Islamic vintage with its sharp thrust against non-Muslim religio-ethnic minorities. The communal orientation of the JKLF got revealed when its cadres went berserk in putting the Kashmiri Pandits to indiscriminate killings obviously to cleanse Kashmir of infidels who could not be tolerated in the republic that was deemed to be Islamic in form and content. And the treatment that was meted out to the Hindu minority as an acid test exposed its commitments to secularism as fake, false and mere pretence.

Yossef Bodansky world-famous expert on Islamic fundamentalism snubbed the former security advisor to the

Governor of J&K state pleading for soft-peddalling with JKLF by reminding him that it was JKLF which had initiated and organised killing of Pandits leading to their forced exodus.²⁶

Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg sponsored and floated the Plebiscite Front that upheld and pursued the secessionist programme with its emphasis on right of self-determination. With a view to adding stridency to the secessionist movement an unholy alliance was forged with the Jamaat-i-Islami cadres to break fresh ground for an armed struggle against the Indian sovereignty over the state of Jammu and Kashmir and as an upshot a terrorist outfit Al Fateh surfaced which indulged in destruction and sabotage on a large scale. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front not only inherited and resurrected the ideological content of Al Fateh but invested it with a new face-lift in terms of impetus and orientation.²⁷ It is a common observation that after 1975-Accord with Mrs. Gandhi, the subversives with a heavy crime record were showered lavish patronage and installed in key positions in government apparatus and National Conference. With the outbreak of insurgency these subversives served the support-plank for the JKLF which established its broad sweep and range with the government falling in line as a matter of sheer connivance.

The drive against liquor shops, beauty and video parlours, cinema halls and other expressions of modern civilisation was carried to the hilt by Allah Tigers which was operating under the cover of JKLF. The outfit continued to operate independently to kill and torture the Kashmiri Pandits, but its witch-priest, Air Marshal Noor Khan, joined the ranks of JKLF and propagated extreme strictness in religion and morals for the reformation and purification of the Muslim society.²⁸ The stance of JKLF vis-a-vis fundamentalisation of Muslim society was the same as that of rabid Jamaat-i-Islami and other outfits which are vociferously communal and brazenly sectarian.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front upholding independence as an option in opposition to the first two options of nexus of Kashmir with India or Pakistan has trapped a number of wiseacres who pontificate as a mere assumption or concoction that third option is nationalistic in content with commitments to secularism. But the said-organisation despite its sham commitments to third option has not at any point of time in its history negated or expressed its opposition to the establishment of Kashmir as a Muslim State with Nizam-e-Mustafa as its ultimate destination establishing Muslim ascendancy and authoritarianism, and brutal discrimination against non-Muslim religious-ethnic minorities. Pakistan and Bangladesh as avowedly Muslim states have liquidated, converted or herded out the Hindu minorities and have suppressed non-conformity, axed tolerance and accommodation and resorted to an unabated policy of persecution. The expulsion of lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits from their home-land in Kashmir has put the secular ideology in deep freeze and the Indian secularists despite its portents have evaded the consequences ensuing from the Muslim refusal to co-exist with the Hindus even though a small minority. And minus the Indian ostriches the world knows that the expulsion of non-Muslim ethnic minorities was the handiwork of JKLF and its affiliates.

The terrorists of the JKLF brand were the first to wage war on the Kashmiri Pandits. The first hit-lists were prepared, issued and updated by its cadres operating from the precincts of mosques and the first killings were resorted to by the hounds of the same outfit. Tika Lal Taploo, B.K. Gangoo, Navin Sapru, Ashok Kumar Qazi, Prem Nath Bhat, Sarwanand Koul Premi, T.K.Razadan, Nila Kanth Ganjoo *et al* were brutally massacred by the cadres of JKLF, who took pride in fixing JKLF tags on their bodies, bleeding and writhing in excruciating pain and agony and sadistically footing dances in extreme glee and joy shared by hordes of Muslims present on the scene. The brutal

killing of Sarla Bhat who was a nurse on the staff of the Institute of Medical Sciences, Srinagar was also the handiwork of JKLF. The thigh of a Hindu lady chopped off from the main body was branded JKLF. Noor Khan, Sher Khan, Bitra Karate, Showkat Bakshi, Yasin Malik, Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru, Hamid Sheikh, Javed Mir and Ashfaq Majid Wani—all owing allegiance to JKLF—have oiled their hands with the blood of Kashmiri Pandits and their women-folk. Bitra Karate in his T.V. Interview shamelessly confessed the massacre of forty Kashmiri Pandits. The total exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley was near complete by October, 1990 and it was brought about by the armed and unarmed activists of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front through ruthless killings, torture and fear psychosis and yet it is secular.

The JKLF in the wake of dastardly killing of the religious minority of Pandits was asked to clarify its position with respect to them and brazenly made it known through the 'Kashmir Times' issued from Jammu that they must play a constructive role in the emergence of Kashmir as an independent state and if they are keen to preserve their cultural heritage, entity and physical existence, they must lend support in full to the JKLF. It sounded funny when Pandits were conveyed that they must prevail upon New Delhi to implement the U.N. Resolutions on Kashmir without any further delay and dither as they are heard in Delhi and have access to the corridors of power. H.N. Jattu broached the subject of Pandit killings with Mufti Bahu-uddin, Ex-Chief Justice, an ideologue of JKLF and Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru, a Pakistani saboteur planted in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Srinagar who had set the pace for Pandit migration through his war on M.L. Bhat, ex-Chief Engineer, posted in the Institute as chief engineer. Though rebuffed, Jattu continued to contact them for stopping the killing of Pandits which was fast gaining pace and momentum. He was asked if the JKLF stand vis-a-vis Kashmiri

Pandits was clarified to him when Ashok Kumar Qazi who was the organising secretary of his organisation was mercilessly tortured to death.

The secular cloak of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front was torn to shreds when mosques that had mushroomed all over the valley on an unprecedented scale were put to the unholy use of spewing out venom against the infidels dubbing them as agents of India and fiating them to quit and buzz off the so-called land of Muslims. They were threatened and cursed in the classical Muslim fashion. The mammoth crowds of Muslims flitting about the streets rent the skies with stinking and lousy slogans and suffused the environs with communal poison and hatred indicating the collapse of their will to resist the frankstein of terrorism. That the war waged by the JKLF terrorists was Islamic in content and spirit was established by the fact of mosques having emerged as the focal centres of their struggle. Do secular movements commence with volatile slogans tinted Islamic? Do secular movements target ethno-religious minorities for the religion that they harbour? From its seminal beginnings the JKLF distanced itself away from the ideological concept of a democratic state based on rational modernity. It did not hold aloft the banner of religious tolerance and human fraternity. In its immediate political behaviour it rejected the involvement of all segments of Kashmiri population and the spree of killings and orgy of loot that the JKLF let loose typical in its Islamic frenzy were seen more as a conspiracy than a rational movement. Its calculation and arithmetic were devised in absolute collaboration with the first generation Muslim learners who lacking in dynamics of rational analysis exaggerated the support structures of America, Islamic countries and more than most Pakistan which failed to wage a war on India as per its pledge. Had JKLF been secular it would not have allowed religious bigotry to shape its political calculations and strategies. Resilience of the

Indian state with its commitments to secularism was not taken note of in factorial analysis.

The Jammu and Kashmir Students Liberation Front (JKSLF) operated as an Islamist organisation nomenclaturising itself as Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen (Muslim Brothers). Its front ranking leader, Hilal Baig, has unequivocally projected and championed the "Islamicisation of Kashmir" as the dominating objective of the current struggle in Kashmir. He also commands the armed wing of the organisation which has set new records in terrorism and destruction.²⁹

The tidal wave of Jihad and religious bigotry that was generated and unleashed by the JKLF flowed into the cess-pool of rape and murder, loot and plunder and to the surprise of the admirers of Jihad and Azadi, the Mujjahids of yesterday and hordes of V-flaunting Muslim supporters are seen taking holy dips and in the process commitments to the "Independent Kashmir" have completely thinned and washed out. The tribal Jihad as per the historical tomes launched in 1947 was lost in the rape of the bazzars of Muzzfarabad and the Jihad of 1989-variety launched with the same gusto and contours has been lost in the habitations of Kashmiri Pandits. The rape of Muzzfarabad was complete in three days and the Pakistani army officer setting the goal and direction of the Jihad could rally them back for more ravishing booties but the rape of the Pandit habitations has unceasingly gone on for seven years and no self-styled champion of Islam has re-grouped them for a renewed Jihad as they are all submerged and lost under the ocean of booties and loot of moneys pouring in from various sources.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation front ushering in a tornado of terrorism was backed up by a gendarme of propagandists mostly drawn from National Conference activists at grass-root level. The operations that the outfit evolved and executed were meticulously planned and sehemed with a view to drumming up euphoric support for

its atrocious killing of Kashmiri Pandits. It banked upon a massive network of propagandists, treacherous and wily, who in the fabrication of lies and their dissemination outstripped and to a large measure excelled even the Nazi propaganda machine. The gory and dastardly killings of innocent Pandits could not be explained even by Muslims and to quench dissent and doubt, the Muslim propagandists hatefully castigated them and commanded that they had been killed after due verification of their anti-Muslim activities and credentials and a stage came with the broadening of their reach and sweep that Muslims fell in line and came to believe that Mujjahids could do no wrong and much against the demands and requirements of sanity they joined the ranks of marauders and killers pledged to wiping out the whole race of Hindu Kafirs. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits *enmasse* from their native abode was maliciously attributed to the then governor, Jagmohan, by the same brand of canard-spinners and to the amazement of everybody Muslims without a difference parroted the same tune and song.

Despite the insidious and spiteful role in the expulsion of Kashmiri Pandits, the JKLF propagandists never contributed to the belief that pandits had started a new chapter of their life as hapless refugees in tattered tentages and ramshackle hutments. Fearing nation-wide backlash the media perhaps at the behest of powers that be played the migration extremely cool, yet there were patriotic agencies which in sheer defiance of government policy of curbs and distortions splashed the Pandit migration supported by harrowing photographs inside and outside the country. The JKLF supporters connected with media took it yet another canard and mischief innovated by Government of India which in Kashmir passes for an incarnation of Satan. To confirm the truth of camps having come up in the desert lands of Jammu and see the reality for themselves, a group of ardent supporters of JKLF flaunting "V" signs, with a few of them connected with media agencies, paid a visit to the

camps at Muthi in the company of a Kashmiri Pandit, whom they found pliant and obliging and had sought his assistance.

Peeping into the first tent etched on one side of the road running through the Jungle of tentages, they were shell-shocked to see a young Kashmiri pandit lady, wan, sallow and broken initiating her two children in learning how to read and write English alphabets and were wondering with gaping mouths that the tents had not broken their tryst with education and learning. After they were reluctantly received into the tent they again felt shocked that the limited space within the tent was maintained spic and span. On enquiry the lady all soaked in tears informed them that her husband in twenties was killed by the JKLF terrorists and now as a widow at 27 she was maintaining her family on the meagre dole that the government paid her and back home her family had enormous landed assets.

After traversing some distance they through the good offices of the Pandit accompanying them entered another tent and found the inmates sitting on a printed blue sheet of cloth with two pillows decently placed perhaps for the guests who might be paying them a visit off and on. The family was presided over by a lady in sixties who, when asked, informed the visitors not only drawing but appeared to be drawing pathological comfort from their plight that her husband was atrociously killed in his own orchard by the gun-wielding Muslim neighbours who did not permit them to perform his last rites and since then they have been grieving over his death in the tent that was allotted to them after a rigorous battle.

One of them truculently told her that Muslims had also lost their near and dear ones, but Kashmiri Pandits never protested and maintained silence. Tears rolling down her sunken eyes the lady meekly told the Muslim wearing a well-cut beard that if two families suffered deaths, each would mourn separately and grieve over its own losses in terms of human life.

A school-going boy sitting by the side of his grandmother could be seen intently listening to the conversation between the Muslim visitors and his grandma. The same person shot him a question if he would like to return to his school in the native village. With all confidence the boy made a telling reply as to how he could return to the same school because his class-mates mostly Muslims had guns to wield and pistols to fire and had punctuated the whole area with hundreds of blasts.

On enquiry the boy again informed them that he was preparing for 10 + 2 examination and would be joining an engineering college in Maharashtra. It was again a shock to them as it did not fit in the scheme of things that they had planned for the Kashmiri Pandit learners. Though living in blighted conditions they had not joined the ranks of waifs and strays. This is what left them dismayed and disappointed.

The group of Muslims had planned to see all the tents and have an interaction with the exiled Pandits for reasons best known to them. But some Kashmiri Pandits who out of sheer curiosity had collected on the scene politely informed them that they were welcome, but their sons and daughters were busily preparing for examinations and hence it was improper and unwise to disturb them at this juncture. If they could choose to pay a visit some other time, they would certainly talk to them at least about the conspiracy that "V" flaunting monsters of hate had hatched to herd them out of their native places to transform Kashmir into a Muslim inferno.

The Muslims linked with various media agencies pretended to be shocked and took it as a jolt to the newly coined diabolical concept of Kashmiriyat and promised the Pandit who had accompanied them and led them to the camps at Muthi that they would certainly highlight the miserable plight of Pandits living in squalid camps. But, to the shock and dismay of the Pandit, yet not convinced of

Muslim diabolerie, they never wrote about it. How could they? This is the destiny that the Muslims perhaps with few exceptions had warily planned in stealth for the Pandits who are stigmatised as Kafirs in Muslim parlance.

6 JAMMAAT-I-ISLAMI—AN OUTFIT OF PAROCHIALS

The Jammaat-i-Islami responsible for paving the way for inaugural of a destructive insurgency in 1988 inchoated in 1942 as a separate chapter from the Jammaat-i-Islami Hind and forging an open-ended affiliation with the Pakistani brand of the outfit doggedly pursued the secessionist agenda and worst form of communalism with its principal opposition to the core principles forming the cornerstone of Indian democratic polity. That it would broaden the sweep and range of its appeal to such an extent that it would emerge as a determining factor of Kashmir politics was practically beyond comprehension. The rigidities of its adherence to the basics of Islam and its practices were not in sync with the pervasive shrine tradition which the Kashmiri Muslims stuck to and could not abandon as an inherited religious practice and behaviour. As is abundantly known the Jammaat-i-Islami as an organisation was held in utter contempt for the abhorrence that it harboured against the shrine worship and the practices smacking of Hinduism. In the seminal stages of its growth and development its appeal and influence were confined to its committed cadres who did not form a spectacular number.

After the deposition of Sheikh Abdullah as the Chief Minister in 1953 the Jammaat-i-Islami as the rabid fundamentalist organisation proliferated at an enormous rate under the patronage of politicals who manned the structures of political power in the state. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad in his efforts to combat Sheikh Abdullah hob-

nobbed with the rabid outfit and made resources to the tune of seventy-five thousand available for the expansion of its roots among the Kashmiri Muslims.³⁰ Moneys were fed to the organisation for establishing Islamic schools and teachers on staff of these seminaries of venom and hate were paid from the Muslim Auqaf (trust)³¹ which has been aiding the Islamisation processes quite generously. The Muslims with pro-Jammat leanings and affiliations were granted out-of-turn promotions, lucrative postings and also appointments in government services. Bakshi persuaded and goaded a number of Muslims in government services to give up their jobs and devote themselves assiduously to the expansion of the organisation at grass-root level.³² The accusation was made by G.M. Sadiq against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad in 1957 on the floor of the House.

Jamaat-i-Islami upholding the secessionist agenda could not but forge links with the Plebiscite Front as an organisation pledged to the secessionist agenda. Many of its front-ranking leaders worked hand in glove with the Plebiscite Front which fact came to lime-light when they courted arrests along with the ardent supporters of the Plebiscite Front. That they were unflinching in their positions became manifest when the Jammat-i-Islami representative attending the People's convention organised by Sheikh Abdullah vehemently opposed the move for dialogue and reconciliation with the central government. The jammat rabids in their concerted bid to isolate Sheikh Abdullah and to impair his public image gave widest possible currency to the theme-song of his betrayal in 1947 for having opted for India to the detriment and demise of broad Muslim interests. The campaign had such vehemence that Sheikh Abdullah wilted and flinched against its vigorous pressure and resorted to numerous postures that smacked of parochialism and communalism much in conflict with his secular pretensions.

The Jamaat-i-Islami entrenched its roots deep in Muslim society and had its hey day during the notorious congress

rule of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and Mir Qusim who showered concessions and privileges galore on the organisation and its sympathisers. The Islamic schools were patronised and financed to proliferate and expand without fear or fetter. Key slots in government apparatus were not only offered but specially reserved for the Jammaat-oriented Muslims. Government services were made available on priority basis in relaxation of rules and norms to the sons and daughters of Mullahs who owed allegiance to and had long associations with the outfit.³³ The Backward Classes Association with Saif-ud Din Soz, now a central Minister, as its secretary was Jamaat-innovated and Jamaat-led and was patronised to scuttle the supreme court judgments which had pushed the Sadiq government into the vortex of a grim crisis. The schools run by government were allowed to be transformed into battle-fields to organise war on the senior-most Kashmiri Pandit teachers who had fought against religious discrimination and were pressing for implementation of Supreme Court judgments in view of the government fiddling & prevarication. To unleash Muslim bigotry and beat Kashmiri Pandits into submission clandestine pacts were forged with the Jammaat-i-Islami rabids who were in the vanguard of anti-Pandit demonstrations yelling out war-cries against them during Kashmiri Pandit Agitation of 1967. It was under the severe pressure of Jamaat-i-Islami politicals and government officers with pro-Jamaat tilt and tendency that Mir Qasim, the treacherous, rushed through the Land Reforms Bill of 1972 divesting the Kashmiri pandits of small chunks of land which were left in their possession after the tyrannical Land reforms Bill of 1952. The said-Bill replete with Communal poison and bias conveyed the signals that Pandits had to be pushed out through economic squeeze to meet the ends of ethnic cleansing. The political and religious clout and credibility of the Jammaat touched a crescendo when it won seven Assembly seats in perfidious collaboration with Sadiq and Qasim as the congress rulers.

There does not seem much of pith and substance in the assessment that Sheikh Abdullah was a prime factor in thwarting and stone-walling the growth and expansion of the Jammaat-i-Islami in Kashmir. If his utterances are a credible guide, it can be said that he was never averse to and at war with the Jammaat-i-Islami and whatever opposition he demonstrated unto the outfit it did not flow from and was not rooted in his ideology and conviction. There were clear indications that he wanted the outfit to carry out his dictates & operate under the wings of his partonage. When there were ample signals from the ground that the Jammaat was gaining a distinctive political personality of its own away from the pale of his person posing a threat to his crown and sceptre, he had no qualms to swoop on it through loot and plunder of its cadres only to give it a jolt but not a death-blow. And ultimately he made a truce with the rabid organisation and that was how the Jamaatists stuffed the innards of his organisation and cabinet. Saif-ud-Din Soz, Mohammad Shafi, Abdul Gani Lone, to name a few, with tremendous Jammaat-i-Islami back-ground and orientation were very close to the Sheikh and the latter two feathered his cabinet. It was Mohammad Shafi who is said to have stopped the Sheikh in his tracks when he was on the point of issuing orders to ban the organisation especially its Islamic Schools and it was Abdul Gani Lone who stuffed the educational institutions with Jammaat commandos and brain-washed Muslims. The Sheikh's fulminations against Jamaat were fake and meaningless. His tirades and innuendoes against it were hollow and pointless. In reality, he had lots of empathies and ideological affinities with the outfit as his secessionist proclivities found a new nourishment at the hands of the organisation which upheld and pursued the secessionist goals with much greater vigour and virulence.

The Jammaat-i-Islami subscribing to blatant communalism and militarised Islamic fundamentalism led to the absolute destruction of an ethos that was rooted in 5000

year old history of Kashmir. The fanatic pro-Pakistan cadres of the outfit wallowing in mental backwardness and religious bigotry not only preached and propagated secession with vehemence but fundamentalised the Muslim society and infrastructure of governance through a large-scale campaign of fundamentalism and indoctrination leaving a pernicious impact on the Muslim youth and nascent class of mediocre professionals. Parochial and destructive the Jammaat-i-Islami worked over-time to uproot and decimate the values of tolerance, non-violence and humanism as weaves of the fabric of Kashmiri society and hammered the Muslims out of the indigenous cultural model contemptuously labelled as un-Islamic and Brahmanical. The Islamisation campaign invested with a pointed thrust against catholicity of outlook, eclecticism and syncretism wreaked havoc on Kashmiri Muslim society which under absolute brutalisation and dehumanisation not only indulged in loot, arson and murder of the native Kashmiri Pandits as acts of piety in tune with religious injunctions, but failed to throw up even a solitary individual or a body of individuals who dared condemn it as retrogression and sheer savagery. The destructive war against the indigenous ethos of non-violence, tolerance and humanism was carried on without a relent by Jammaat-i-Islami net-work of 11,000 urdu and Arabic schools led by Mullahs as commandos and its nodal organisations like Islamic Students League, Islamic students organisation, Jamaat-e-Tulaba *et al.* The Muslim killers leading various terrorist outfits straining every nerve to destruct the deep-rooted unique identity and authenticity of culture groups subscribing to a world view in sharp contrast to the value-less value structure planted on intolerance and religious myopia has had their grooming and churning in the Islamic schools as sanctuaries of rabid hate and prejudice. The Islamisation campaign unleashed with the fury of a hurricane and the state apparatus falling in line targetted and bruised the indigenous milieu embedded in the Vedic Age and the same

was given a phillip by the extension of invitations to the religious Mullahs from inside and outside the country. The Jammaat as the pioneer of Islamisation campaign held an International Conference at Srinager in full knowledge of the powers that be and invited the Imam of Mecca to boost up its religious credibility with a view to mustering support for the launch of a frontal attack on the Indian presence in Kashmir.

A deal of understanding was struck between Sheikh Abdullah and Jammaat-i-Islami through the good offices of the sister of the Saudi Arabian King when she paid a visit to Kashmir. In 1981-82 the Saudi Arabian intelligence chief came to Kashmir twice with a view to adding new strideney and strength to the secessionist movement which was in the processes of being fed by the Sheikh and Jamaat-i-Islami who were never at different points on the wavelength. Rector of Madina university also paid a visit to Kashmir to boost up the political fortune of the Anti-Hindu and anti-India forces in Kashmir. It has been oft-stated that the state power and Jammaat-i-Islami have worked in tandem to Islamise and indoctrinate the Kashmiri polity for the launch of Jehad against the infidels. Chasing the twin objectives of secession and Islamisation the Jammaat emerged as the magnetic pole that gravitated the secessionist forces to itself with the state power actively sharing the lead-role of the rabid outfit.

The Jammaat-i-Islami in Kashmir has launched a consistently virulent battle against the concept of secularism which envisages a society sane and rational, pluralistic and accommodative. Contributing to myopic communalism and fanaticism it upholds an Islamic society placed on the pedestal of Shariat, Islamic precept and tradition as the ultimate destination of Muslims. Essentially parochial and leagues away from modernity and rational democratic temper it has expressed its visceral hatred against a system that is pluralistic and liberal contributing to composite culture patterns. As Islam has always thrived and expanded

under state patronage and protection the Jammaat does not subscribe to the separation of religion from state power and that is why it has made an inveterate mis-use of mosques as vehicles of genocide, terror, scare and communal tension and mosques in Kashmir as is well known have proliferated in the post-1947 era with Arab moneys. The formidable net-work of 600 study centres, units, thousands of Islamic schools, libraries and mosque committees have sown and scattered the seeds of bigotry and religious indoctrination with a view to destroying secularism as a way of life and posing the Islamic society regulated by Islamic laws as an alternate model. The socio-political programmes as projected by the rabid outfit are deep-dyed in the Islamic colour and Jihad is posed as a weapon for the establishment of a socio-political destination as conceived in Nizam-e-Mustafa. The lone Jamaat M.L.A. in a press conference in 1980 said that secular and socialist forces were a severe threat to the Kashmir Muslims.³⁴

The Jammaat-i-Islami with its vast array of brain-washed and regimented cadres from all walks of life with urban and rural setting has acted as an arm of Pakistan on the soil of Kashmir. It has not only exported its cadres to the training camps in Pak-occupied Kashmir, Afghanistan and Iran for arms training but ensured Muslim intervention through Pakistan to add more doses of lethal violence to the Kashmiri Muslim ethos already soaked in violence and fanaticism. The Dukhtaran-i-Milat (Daughters of Muslim community) as the women's wing of the outfit has also exported thousands of Muslim girls to the same camps that are manned by Sudanese, Saudi Arabian and Afghan desperadoes.³⁵ Drawing main sustenance from Pakistan in terms of fundings, strategies and political patronage, the Jammaat has been in thick contacts with the Islamic countries that are chasing the goals of fundamentalist Islam. The war though low in intensity was initially unleashed by the local Muslim terrorists affiliated to the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, but was in no time as a matter

of strategy taken over under the instructions of mentors across the borders by the Hizbul Mujahideen which is the fierce fundamentalist armed wing of the Jammat-i-Islami butchers. On the plane of ideology the Jammat is the votary of the Khomeini brand of revolution and poses the Islamic Republic of Pakistan though a failed state as the model of Nizam-e-Mustafa. It owes ideological allegiance to and is directly a party to the crusading forces of militarised fundamentalist Islam that have been operating on twin fronts of Kashmir and Tajikistan with a view to over-running India and Central Asia.³⁴

With a view to ethnically cleansing Kashmir the rabid Jammat-i-Islami through its armed wing of Hizbul Mujahideen has waged war on the native Pandits in close complicity with multiform Muslim terrorist formations pursuing the same end. The terrorists of the outfit with a terrific religious background and indoctrination have added bone-chilling and horrendous crimes to the despicable book of medieval savageries and brutalities. Before putting the Pandits to a barrage of bullets they in servile obedience to their religious training in the cesspools of Islamic schools inflicted torture and pain on them by way of chopping off their tongues and peeling off their skin, gouging out their eyes and ripping open their bellies. The infliction of pain and agony, death and destruction on the Kafirs reveals their new dynamics as fanatics, mad men, psychopaths and mentally abnormal. The merchants of crime stuffing the outfit have not been hired to assassinate the Pandits but they have been consciously and wilfully pursuing the path of extermination of Pandits to work out the Islamic goals of realising an exclusivist social and political order smacking of fascism. As was configured by the Jammat and its hateful leaders the wilful assassins have barged into the houses of Pandits, committed rape and plunder and squirted bullets on them. It has been a plain murder of Pandits for the reason that they have refused to join the ranks of rebellious Muslims and have withstood the pres-

asures exerted on them through the state power manned by Jammaat-oriented Muslims and men of their ilk. The killing of Pandits by the Muslim terrorist outfit of HM awash with Islamic bigotry and hate has not only destabilised the Pandit minority but has also symbolised a wanton onslaught on the historical identity of Kashmir founded on the plank of composite culture and syncretism.

The Jammaat-Islami with its known linkages with the politicals and rabid fundamentalists of Pakistan and other Islamic countries has minced no words in repudiating and rejecting the accession of the J&K State to the Indian Union. Despite its participation in a number of elections as required under a democratic dispensation its fundamental stance has been that of stiff and uncompromising opposition to the State's accession to India. As is widely known the Indian Independence Act of 1947 had empowered the Maharaja of the state to exercise his options of acceding to either of the two dominions of India and Pakistan and the Maharaja exercised his options which subsequently were ratified by the constituent assembly of the J&K State constituted under due process of law. The Jammaat-i-Islami as a fundamentalist organisation has not swallowed the reason and logic of the whole historical reality and taking to the plank of two-nation theory it has been propagating for the state's accession to Pakistan on the basis of Muslim majority character of the state. With a view to hiving off the state from the Indian Union the Jamaat has launched not only a secessionist campaign through its Mullah-dominated mosque committees but has also sponsored a terrorist outfit of Hizbul Mujahidden which is armed to the teeth and has inflicted brutal violence and persecution with its comparable parallels to the history of Nazis on a segment of population that has reposed no faith in the absurd formulations of two-nation theory and Islamic society inspired by Islamic law and precept. Steeped in tribalism and narrow perspectives the Jammaat has been instrumental in propagating codes and fiats lacking in relevance to the con-

temporary techno-cultural and civilisational developments. In its sharp opposition to the clubs, video-parlours, cinema houses, pubs and bars, the organisation as a combination of stereo-typed Mullahs, ignorant, fanatic and backward, has made them as the basis of its political and religious opposition to India which has been a gargantuan culture and civilisation with a deep streak of liberalism and catholicism running through it.

In May, 1973 the hard-core Jammaat-i-Islami followers unleashed massive religious frenzy in Srinagar and Anantnag against a volume titled as Book of Knowledge authored by a European. The book was already banned yet the Muslim fundamentalists accused Government of India of importing books replete with anti-Islamic materials. Tulba as the students wing of the organisation launched a virile campaign against the university authorities to withdraw books from the university library which included outline of history by H.G. Wells, Divine Comedy by Dante, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Volumes 5 and 9 and all works on history by Toynbee.³⁵

7 AFGHANS AGAIN INVITED— PARADOXICAL

They say that public memory is short-lived, but there are stupendous disasters which cannot be easily forgotten. As per the consensual estimate of historians, the Afghan tenure of rule in Kashmir was a total disaster and all hues of people especially the Muslim majority rued the day when two Muslim leaders had invited the Afghans to annex Kashmir to Kabul. They are said to have groaned and smarted under the barbarous rule of Afghans and yearned for the times when they would be redeemed from their oppression and ferocity. Despite the experience being bitter and awesome, the Muslims by and large bloomed with elation when a new nexus with the Afghans though for a different ball game was forged by the Muslim outfits operating under dubious nomenclatures with open-ended patronage from ISI of Pakistan that has been feeding and funding terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir. It is after due deliberations that the strategists across the borders inducted and are inducting the Afghans said to be war-hardened into the secessionist ranks. The twin motives behind this move are to add more teeth to the on-going terrorism and assure the Kashmiri Muslims that they are not alone in the crusade against India and Kashmiri Pandits. The nexus though evolved in stealth is an open secret known to all levels and shades of Muslim opinion.

If history is a guide, there should have been a strong resistance to the move, but there was no protest, loud or subdued, not even a murmur of resentment. Instead all

cells of Muslim intellectuals operating in every house and office, factory and field, hospital and school endorsed the correctness of the measure as it was deemed to quicken the processes of redemption from the Indian hegemony. What is surprising that the historical wrongs and indignities that the Afghans had perpetrated on 'the garden of eternal beauty' and the populace inhabiting it were conveniently bypassed and forgotten. That they had reduced them to dismal poverty and abysmal illiteracy and had launched wanton assaults on their moral fibre were not considered for due thought and deliberations. What cements their bonds with the Afghans is the war that they have launched against Pandits as the branded enemies of Islam and political linkages with India though voluntarily forged.

The change in perception was brought about by the protracted war that the Afghans fought against Soviet Russia which was maligned for spearheading the godless philosophy of communism. The war that had all the ingredients of crusade was blatantly fuelled and fed by the lethal weapons and bags of money funnelled by America through Pakistan. The final discomfiture and fall of Soviet structure was hailed and celebrated as an enormous victory for Islam. The Khomeini brand of revolution plus the Soviet collapse inflamed the fundamentalist Muslims and their crowds of supporters with pride and passion. The Islamic organisations that have proliferated and mush-roomed like vicious weeds with lavish patronage through tonnes of money from a number of Muslim countries have widely set afloat and disseminated the thesis of restoration of caliphate (though consigned to the dustbin of history) from Kashmir and central Asia to the shores of ATLANTIC OCEAN. The thesis as such dyed in deep green appeared mesmerising, viable and within the realms of possibility with the sudden, cracking and crumbling of political and administrative edifice in Kashmir and hounding out of the entire native tribe of Kashmiri Pandits deemed as a vital support-plank for the Indian presence in Kashmir.

The Afghans have been perceived through the prism of the same thesis of re-emergence and re-vitalisation of Islam regaining its old glory. For the Muslim masses with few exceptions who do not make a summer, they have ceased to be the hated people tagged as butchers, kakad khans-foolish and low in understanding, sodomites and rapists and in actual estimation their stock has incredibly notched up. They are now warmly and Jubilantly hailed as the soldiers of Islam, Mujjahids and ghazis fighting and battling for the holy cause of Islamic religion and extirpating infidelity and as operatives on Kashmir soil working to the end of redeeming and freeing Muslim millions from the imaginary tyrannies of infidels and heathens and materialising the dream of independence, annexation to Pakistan and Nizam-e-Mustafa. A real big task in the service of Islam by all standards.

With this remarkable change in perception the Afghans have been harboured and welcomed with open arms. They are free to intrude upon the privacy of men and women. They are fed on beef and other protein rich foods. The Kashmiris present on the scene are said to have added startling records to the domain of hospitality by not closing their doors at the fall of dark nights. The houses as fortresses with doors and windows shut and barred is a by-gone tale. The Afghan Mujjahids are accompanied by other brands of Mujjahids hailing from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Libya and Algeria. Poems of praise and appreciation have been sung and woven around them. Akbar Bhai, Jamal Bhai and Bomber Khan *et al* have resorted to large scale lechery (please consult their rape records) and are objects of extreme veneration as they are deemed to liberate Kashmir from the clutches of Indian security forces and ushering in a new era for Islam and if and when killed in encounters or hide-outs, their burials are largely attended. People opine that it could be out of moral obligation. But it could not be for guys who have cruelly flouted and trampled upon common place text-book morals and other ac-

ceptable canons allied to them. For the votaries of Kashmiriat, all brands of Muslims with whatever credentials, stock and hue even though they vitiate the very spirit of it are acceptable no matter what the price be. After all it has the sanction of the mullah and the mosque.

The Afghans and other Muslim mercenaries drawn from various Muslim countries where they are considered as sources of great nuisance and trouble and are outcasts have been invited and inducted into Kashmir and to everybody's sorrow and dismay have found their unstinted and volatile supporters, who have succeeded in creating a climate of opinion in their favour by extolling their virtues as soldiers of Islam and their unmitigated devotion to the cause of Jihad. What is missed that they only camouflage as crusaders, but actually are in hot pursuit of lechery, sodomy and rape.

There is the standing testimony of a surrendered hardcore terrorist Tariq Hussain alias Turkey who has unambiguously revealed that the most alluring factor for the Afghan and Pakistani militants to sneak into Kashmir was the lust for beautiful girls. He named a Pakistani terrorist who violated the chastity of 19-year old Zarina and made off with her to Pakistan as a prime catch. He disclosed that dishonouring of Kashmiri women was the essential cause for the local terrorists to drift away from foreign militants.

But Turkey who had pawned his soul to the demon of Muslim bigotry has concealed the abominable treatment meted out to Kashmiri Pandit women by the terrorists of local variety. Girija, a poor lab-assistant in a school, was gang-raped and chopped into two halves on a sawing-machine, a barbarity that can cause a shiver to class savages. In reality, the terrorists of local brand and of Afghan and Pakistani make are on the same wavelength and own descent to the same tradition and inheritance of acquired barbarity. They have out-heroded one another in the perpetration of brutalities and cruelties on the innocent victims harbouring a diverse faith and in the process have

notched up amazing records. Everytime when crusade with its bag full of cruelties and atrocities is launched against the Kashmiri Pandits, the likes of Turkey are in the lead-role. In 1931, the crusades against the Maharaja ended in the blatant loot and murder of Pandits and 1931 had its own quota of Turkeys. The crusade of 1947 was lost in the pools and puddles of loot, murder, arson and rape and the local Turkeys did not lag behind. The crusade of 1989-variety unleashed with the hurricane fury in the name of Independence and annexation to Pakistan with Nizam-e-Mustafa as its lode-star was led by Turkeys who have put up a sign inscribed with loot, murder, arson and rape of Kashmiri Hindus mesmerising all to rally and to the knowledge of all, all have rallied for the unholy-holy task.

Extremely tired of militancy, yet perserving, in his heart of hearts convinced of its futility, yet duplicitous, a JKLF activist, said to be an ideologue, camouflaging his identity under a thickly grown beard, sat quietly sipping a drink in the company of his comrades at a bar in Jammu. Suddenly leaving his seat with the brimming glass in his hand, he stridently headed towards a Kashmiri Pandit, perhaps his old acquaintance, also busily boozing and insisted on him to join him at the table. The Pandit grew suspicious and equivocated for a while, but somehow out of courtesy, a hall-mark of a Pandit, accompanied him to the table. Quite knowledgeable about Kashmir affairs, the Pandit broke the ice by asking him the latest about Kashmir and its future. The activist resorting to fanfaronade, a trait Muslims have honed into a skill with the on-set of terrorism, shot straight that Kashmir is lost to Pandits and India.

Despite being in exile for 7 years, it was hard for the Pandit to swallow it. Fiddling with his glass, he first asked as to how it was lost when the gun-wielding Mujahids have not captured an inch of Kashmir soil for 'Independent-Kashmir'. With four larges in his tummy, the activist fully pepped up informed the Pandit in all exuberance that the Afghans have taken over the crusade against India and he

should know that they put up a valiant battle against Soviet Russia and forced its withdrawal from the Muslim soil of Afghanistan and India by all standards a weak, poor and internally riven state is unable to withstand the thrust and fury of Afghan onslaught.

The activist did not stop there. Forgetting that he was carousing in a bar, he flusteringly stood up and painted an Afghan as a war-steeled soldier with Allah on his lips, two deadly Klashnikovs in his two hands, and a brick in his bag dangling from his shoulder.

What is this brick in his bag for ? Asked the Pandit in absolute astonishment.

The JKLF activist now lost as he was gulping at a furious rate explained to the Pandit, "With the brick under his head, he sleeps in the open."

The Pandit felt his condition and satisfied the Afghan in the activist by telling him that war is won and liberation is achieved.

8 MASSACRE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

The Muslim terrorists operating under multiple forms of incarnations like Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, Muslim Janbaz Force, Ul Umur, Al Burq, Hizbul Mujahideen, Al Jihad, Ikhwan-ul-Muslim *et al* sharing visceral hatred against Kashmiri Pandits subjected them to intimidation, panic, rape, murder and sexual assault with a view to exterminating them from the soil of Kashmir. In sheer violation of universally accepted charter of rights and law as couched in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants the terrorists debased, dehumanised and brutalised the cultured and moderate community of Kashmiri Pandits by destructing and killing them in a punitive war. In heaping death and destruction on them, the terrorists pursue the objective of dismemberment of the state from the Indian liberal democratic order for a new political alignment based on religion. Terror was created and violence propagated to obliterate dissent and opposition to the formulated goals of the terrorists. The elements that were deemed inimical to the terrorist campaign have been liquidated with impunity and subjected to an untold orgy of Nazi-type torture and persecution. Waves of communalism have been fanned and fuelled thereby polarising the Kashmiri society for furtherance of political ends. The Kashmiri pandits as a distinct ethno-religious group have been under a conspiracy targetted, maimed and butchered in groups and put to detestable forms of violence and brutality to destruct the Indian support planks to materialise the secessionist goal.

thus flagrantly violating and transgressing their inherent political rights and freedoms.

As an indoctrinated breed churned out from the Muslim seminaries of hate, fanaticism and religious bigotry the Muslim terrorists launched an all-out religious crusade against the non-Muslim ethnic groups directed to the end product of establishing an Islamic state placed on the foot stool of Shariat (Islamic Law) which reduces the ethnic and religious minorities to the exiles of a gulag deprived of human rights and human dignity. They through the dynamics of a religious war are in the quest of pan-Islamic theme and vision of ascendancy of Islam and the socio-political system bearing its seal and sanction at the expense of religion and faith espoused by minority groups and sub-groups. The militarised Islam is not chasing political goals alone but is rivetting its sights on religious objectives too. The forcible imposition of a particular religion along with its socio-political order on an ethnic minority harbouring its own set of beliefs and forms of worship is violative of human rights and essential freedoms that flow from them.

With the shared ideology and agenda of thrusting a second partition on India and transforming the state of Jammu and Kashmir into an Islamic state, the Muslim terrorists have lost no time in spotting their political and religious enemies in the Hindu minorities especially the Kashmiri pandits. Politically the Kashmiri pandits repose full faith in and are unflinching supporters of the secular polity of India and as such do not subscribe to any trend of thought and wave of movement aiming at snapping the historical, cultural and political ties of the state with India. It is pertinent to put that they have made no mean contributions to the dynamics of growth, development and consolidation of democratic and secular order and political and economic humanism allied with it and as a patriotic force have bitterly opposed the constitutional barriers which have generated the vicious and baneful forces of separatism and fundamentalism in Kashmir. In matters of religion the

pandits with the chequered history of torture and persecution at the hands of Muslims have rejected the antediluvian tendencies breeding religious perversion and paranoia and are wedded to the Indian discourse of allowance for tolerance and non-conformity and stand for full flow of freedom for every individual to preach and practise his religion. They have not only mocked at but held in utter contempt the Islamic police enforcing codes and fatwas (religious decrees).

The Kashmiri Pandits have vigorously fought the secessionist forces seeking the placement of Jammu and Kashmir outside the political and constitutional umbrella of India. They fought the Plebiscite Front which as an organisation strove for and was pledged to the secession of the state for its emergence as the personal fiefdom of the Sheikh dynasty. After the Plebiscite Front as a result of political developments was deemed to have lost its political relevance and was disbanded, the condemnation of Pandits and hateful thrust against them did not come to end and as always they were maligned and projected as the enemies of the Muslim secessionist goals and ambitions. They were abhorred and projected as the "sworn enemies" and concerted efforts were set afoot to marginalise them for the fact that they stood for the fuller merger and integration of the state with the Union of India. The Muslim identity of Kashmir to the exclusion of diverse ethno-religious minorities as an essential cog in the processes of total Islamisation pursued at state level was exposed to the shreds by the Pandit minority. That is why they have been branded as the inveterate enemies of Muslim identity which is being perceived under constant threat from India harbouring a Muslim population equivalent to that of Pakistan.

With their well-known positions on politics and religion the Kashmiri Pandits as such have been opposed to any movement for Kashmir's annexation with Pakistan and are equally inimical to the retrograde Muslim programme of

pushing the state into the lap of rabid fundamentalism and they, therefore, as a resisting force were mercilessly massacred and eliminated in hundreds. Some of the killed were engineers while some held positions in administrative set-up. Some victims of genocide were teachers with remarkable achievements in the domain of learning and creative thinking while some pursued legal profession. A Hindu scientist who was brutalised to death had a number of research papers to his credit while another was a high-brow intellectual with enormous studies in the realms of philosophy. Some of the killed ran groceries while others held ordinary jobs hardly making two ends meet. Even a mad person was not spared. Most of the victims to the Muslim massacre were innocent and peace-loving people who had lived in penury and had been denied opportunities under the policy of discrimination which was institutionalised by a system dominated by the Muslims.

As a weak and unarmed religio-ethnic group the Muslim terrorists put them to a mass massacre and had they not been prompted by their "race-memory", a repertoire of past history of their persecution, to buzz off their natural habitat, the terrorists, wildly frenzied and bent upon their destruction and decimation, would have finished them off as a species.³⁶

Terror was created through threats, bomb-blasts, rumours and apochryphal allegations and the terror machine was so endemic that every man, woman and child became vulnerable. No Pandit felt safe from the penumbra of violence and terror. Kashmir for the hapless Hindus was reduced to a killing field which was prowled about by communal and terrorist hyenas.

It was not only in violation of the canons of ethics and morality that Kashmiri Pandits as a miniscule minority were cruelly killed and tortured but also in utter disregard of decent and civilised political deportment recognised by the Charter of Human Rights Declaration and several other international agreements. The killings were mon-

strous and barbaric paling the killings of Jews by the Nazis into a triviality. The Pandits were abducted from homes, work-places or streets and tortured and killed to the brutal ecstasy of their tormentors. The terrorists butchered them even in their homes in the presence of their defenceless and hapless inmates. Labelling them as "informers" and "agents of India", they were killed in large numbers without any considerations of age, vocation and political commitments. It is a genocide of Hindus for the political commitments that they harboured and the religion that they espoused. As members of a community with a tremendous history in time they have been bodily and mentally harmed and injured and conditions have been created to bring about their death and destruction. The terrorists have not concealed their first resolve to destroy the Kashmiri Pandits not only as political opponents but also as religious enemies. They have generated tremendous mass support for the genocide of Pandits through the Mosque Committees, plethora of Islamic organisations and Quranic Schools run by the Jamaat-i-Islami.

The horrendous torture deaths brought about by a resort to barbaric methods will cause a shiver down the spine of the worst Hitlerites. Burning cigarettes were applied to the naked bodies of Kashmiri Pandits. Boiling wax was poured on highly sensitive parts of their bodies. Nails were driven into their foreheads. Their eye-balls were gouged out and tongues chopped off. Male genitals were cut off. Private parts and breasts of women were hewn open. Women were ripped into two equal parts on a wood-slicing machine. Gangrapes were resorted to. Bellies were ripped open for entrails to spill out. Hairs from the heads were plucked out. They were hanged and bullets pumped into their bodies. Kidneys were extracted from the victims and offered to their parents to chew them at pain of death. Brains were hammered out. All barbaric.³⁷

Torture deaths have been brought about by the following cruel and savage practices:-

1. Hanging
2. Burning alive
3. Strangulation by steel wires
4. Draining of blood in hospitals
5. Drowning alive
6. Beating to death
7. Dragging to death
8. Breaking of body parts
9. Dismemberment of body
10. Slicing
11. Fleecing
12. Gouging of eye balls
13. Branding with red-hot iron bars
14. Impaling
15. Slaughter³⁸

In absence of government computations about the killings of Kashmiri Pandits, Sikhs and other Hindus, private agencies and non-government organisations have put the number of Hindus of all shades who have been killed at 2,500 out of which Kashmiri Pandits stand out with a figure of eighteen hundred and odd. The Report submitted to the National Human Rights Commission by PKM has put the figures of killed Pandits at 319 till october, 1990. B.N. Nissar, editor of the *Kashyapvani*, has issued out a list of 765 Kashmiri Pandits who were brutally massacred. As per him twenty two ladies were raped and killed, sixty-six males were kidnapped and released which included Vijay Kout, director of the Regional Insitute of Science and Technology and Dr. A.K. Dhar, director of the Regional Research Laboratory, eighteen were hanged to death, twenty-five ladies were raped and let off, eight were strangled, hundred twenty- four were kidnapped and killed and sixty were critically wounded and died for want of media laid. No fewer than fifty seven sikhs have been killed. It is said that many a mass massacre of Kashmiri Pandits of Sangrampora dimension was suppressed and not

leaked to the press under the instructions of the then Home Minister of India.

The following persons belonging to the minority community of Hindus especially the Kashmiri Pandits as infidels have been tortured and killed by the methods mentioned above:-

Tika Lal Taploo

Name: Tika Lal Taploo

Fathers Name: Pandit Nand Lal Taphoo

Date of Birth: 6th oct, 1927

Date of Assassination: 14th September, 1989

Residence: Chinkral Mohalla, Habba Kadal, Srinagar

Survived by Wife (50), Son (24, 21), Daughter (27)

Tika Lal Taploo was a lawyer by profession and had been in politics for long. He had fought elections to the J&K Legislative Assembly a number of times but could not make it to the Assembly because of the jerrymandering of the Assembly segment he would usually fight elections from. He enjoyed immense popularity as a social and political activist. He was put to bullets by the armed killers of JKLF. His assassination came as a shock to large sections of Kashmiri population. His funeral procession was stoned by the Muslim rabids and was attended among others by Kedar Nath Sahni and L.K. Advani as he was the Vice-President of the J&K Unit of Bhartiya Janata Party. The Muslims downed the shutters of their shops as a mark of respect to the martyr, but they had to re-open their shops when issued commands not to mourn the death of a Kafir.

Nila Kanth Ganjoo

Name: Nila Kanth Ganjoo

Father's Name: Mahadev Ganjoo

Date of Assassination: 4th October, 1989

Residence: Karan Nagar, Srinagar

Survived by wife (70), sons (51,49), daughters (55)

Nila Kanth Ganjoo was an ex-Sessions Judge with lots of legal acumen. He had emerged as a detestable person for the Muslim secessionists as and when he heard the case of Maqbool Butt who was accused of murder of an intelligence officer, Amar Chand and on the basis of the evidence collected and deposed in the case had ordered the execution of the accused. The accused had gone in appeal against his judgment, but the death sentence was upheld even by the apex court. Ganjoo lived under constant threat of life. His house was raided and bombed umpteen times and the government had set up a police post at his house. With the rise of militarised Islam in Kashmir he was put to bullets on a busy road in Srinagar in broad daylight by the JKLF assassins. His body lying in a pool of blood was not even covered. Police prevaricated to arrive on the scene. Killers had left a note on his body warning anyone against picking it up. Ganjoo was killed in cold blood because he was a Kashmiri Pandit. The twenty-two witnesses who had recorded their evidence in the case were all Muslims and they were not murdered or even hurt. Instead they were amnestied. The Justice of the High court who had heard the appeal in the case was also a Muslim. He was not killed for upholding the decision of the Sessions Court. Abdul Gani Lone, said to be a corrupt stooge of some foreign powers, is believed to be behind all the raids and bombing attacks on his residence.

Sarwanand Koul "Premi" Virendra Koul

Name: Sarwanand Koul "Premi" and Virendran Koul

Father's Name: Gopi Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 9.6.1926/4.5.1962

Date of Assassination: 30.4.1990

Residence: Sofshalli, Anantnag

Survived by wife (60), son (35), daughter (26)

"Premi" was a poet and scholar. He stuck to his hamlet despite the rise in terrorism. He had the psyche of a teacher in believing that he would withstand the Islamic hurricane as he had taught every dog in and around the belts of his village and hence could not be so ungrateful as to bite him to death. But things proved otherwise. The Muslim terrorists entered his house on 28th April, 1990 and ordered all the members of his family to get collected in one room alongwith the ornaments and moneys, shawls and precious clothes. Whatever precious they had in their home was offered to the killers-cum-looters. The ornaments that the ladies were putting on were also cruelly snatched. Stuffing their booties in one suitcase Premi was ordered to carry it and follow them for a word just a small distance away from his house. The members of his family wailed and moaned. The killers assured them that he would return safe and unharmed. His son insisted upon accompanying his old father. "If you wish, you may also accompany him", said the killers. The treatment that was meted out to the father and his son can shame even the worst Muslim tyrants. The spot where Premi would put his tilak mark was nailed. He was tortured by burning bits of cigarettes. The limbs of his body were broken. His eyes were gouged out. He was hanged from a tree and bullets were fired on him. His son was put to the same orgy of torture and death.

Bansi Lal Sapru

Name: Bansi Lal Sapru

Father's Name: Keshav Nath Sapru

Date of Birth: 30.2.1945

Date of Assassination: 24.4.1990

Residence: Gulab Bagh, Srinagar

Survived by wife(37), Sons(16 and 13)

He was accosted at the gate of his house by some neighbours and was carried along into his own orchard for a word. Three shots were pumped into him from close range. One shot struck his head. He fell dead and was found wallowing in his own pool of blood. His family screamed in pain and agony but nobody came even to console them.

Radha Krishen Kaw

Name: Radha Krishen Kaw

Father's Name: Balbhadher Kaw

Date of Birth: 18.5.1931

Date of Assassination: 24.8.1990

Residence: Kralkhud, Srinagar

Survived by wife(54), mother(75), daughter(35), son(3)

He was a veteran teacher and had retired as a Tehsil Education Officer. He all through his career had taught thousands of Muslim scholars and was busy in the teaching processes even after his retirement. The Muslim assassins entered the school where he was teaching a class and forcibly took him out from the back door of the school and sprayed him over with bullets. He was said to be massacred by the JKLF murderers.

Ashwani Kumar Garyali

Name: Ashwani Kumar Garyali

Father's Name: Shamboo Nath Garyali

Date of Birth: 23.4.1965

Date of Assassination: 24.6.1990

Residence: Chattabal, Srinagar

Survived by father(70), mother(60), brother(26), sister(22)

He was a bright and budding boy and was doing chartered accountancy. Five masked men affiliated with JKLF entered his room where he was studying and blamed him for being an informer. They carried him down to the first floor of his own residence and pumped five bullets into his head and abdomen. He was immediately rushed to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar for surgery. The doctors refused to admit him. He was carried to the Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura where doctors did not bother to attend on him and allowed him to die. He was sent to the Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial Hospital, Rainawari for post-mortem where his relatives allege that they had to wait for hours on end and were asked to pay money for the routine. His parents strongly believe that had he been operated upon in SMHS Hospital in time he would have survived the trauma. Garyali's father weeping and wailing had rushed to the local police station for a vehicle to carry him to hospital. The SHO, a Muslim, avoided and the poor father went on begging him for a vehicle. He severely taunted the Pandit, who, perhaps, did not realise that he was relishing his distress to the last dregs of it.

Mrs. Sheela Koul(Tiku)

Name: Sheela Koul(Tiku)

Husband's Name: Pran Nath Tiku

Date of Birth: December 1942,

Date of Assassination: 31.10.1989

Residence: Dalhasanyar, Srinagar

Survived by

She was a genial tempered house-wife looking after her family with love and affection. On the fateful day she had gone to see her brother at Shivapora, Srinagar. While returning home at dusk she was put to bullets at Habbakadal bridge. She was brought home on a hand-cart as three-wheelers suddenly stopped plying on the route. The taxi-wallahs on road refused to carry her to the hospital. Despite repeated phone calls to the SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, the ambulance failed to arrive. She was carried to the hospital on a folding bed where she was left unattended. She was shot in the chest and had a head injury. The JKLF terrorists are said to be her killers.

Pushker Nath Razdan

Name: Pushker Nath Razadan

Father's Name: Tika Lal Razdan

Date of Birth: 18.3.1943

Date of Assassination: 12.10.1990

Residence: Khonmuha, Pulwama

Survived by wife(43), sons(23,20), daughter(16)

Some terrorists under masks barged into his house at 9 in the night and straightaway knocked him down and dragged

him out. He was shot at the left side of his chest. His wife and others in the family wept and wailed, but nobody came to their rescue. Ultimately he was carried to the Army Hospital at Badami Bagh in Srinagar where he was operated upon. He failed to survive the fatal wounds even after surgery. The policemen from the Pantachauk Police-Station arrived on the scene after he was cremated. He was allegedly killed by the Hizbul Mujjahideen hounds.

Prem Nath Bhat

Name: Prem Nath Bhat

Father's Name: Laxman Ji Bhat

Date of Birth: 5.12.1932

Date of Assassination: 27.12.1989

Residence: Anantnag

Survived by wife(52), sons(42,38), daughter(31)

He was a prominent lawyer enjoying immense popularity and confidence of all communities. Having attended the court for the day he was returning to his home when the Muslim terrorists pumped bullets straight into his head. Muslims in the neighbourhood of the lane where he was murdered in cold blood sadistically chuckled and whispered, "Another is felled." Though popular with the Muslims nobody even offered condolences on his brutal killing. Instead it was hailed as a tremendous triumph of Islam and Nizam-e-Mustafa.

He was a superb writer, orator and above all a nationalist with visions of India resurrected and reconstructed on the cultural and spiritual heritage of India. As an ardent votary of unity in diversity he opposed all barriers of segregation built by communal, casteist and obscurantist forces. He unflinchingly stood for positive ideology of national integrity which he was pained to see wilting under

the leadership of forces self-serving and with infirm commitments.³⁹

The religious rites required to be performed on the tenth day could not be performed. All Kashmiri Pandits were scared, frightened and terrorised and the administration deliberately posed to be in deep coma. Despite curfew the terrorists disrupted the last rites on tenth day and planted a bomb in the courtyard of the house during the period of mourning. The family was forced to migrate to Jammu in view of threats doled out to it.⁴⁰

A JKLF hound, Manzoor-ul-Islam, is facing trial for his murder.

Makhan Lal Raina

Name: Makhan Lal Raina

Father's Name: Gopi Nath Raina

Date of Birth: 23.3.1938

Date of Assassination: 22.6.1990

Residence: Kharyar, Srinagar

Survived by wife(42), daughter(22), son(20), father(80), mother(68)

He was a medical assistant posted at the dispensary at Khan Sahib in Badgam. He was quite popular with the local Muslims for the services he would be rendering them. He was picked up from the dispensary itself in presence of many Muslims. Nobody came to his rescue. He was brutally tortured and finally shot dead. His dead body was said to have been chopped and hurled away and finally recovered from Dardpora in Badgam. He is allegedly killed by the JKLF murderers.

Chand Ji Kher

Name : Chand Ji Kher

Father's Name : Dina Nath Kher

Date of Birth : 2.3.1972

Date of Assassination : 17.7.1990

Residence : Vessu, Anantnag

Survived by mother (55), sister (35)

He was a young boy in his teens. He was called out by his Muslim friends who shot at him and buzzed off the scene. He was poor and indigent and had returned to his native hamlet for sale of his bits of property. He had nothing to fall back upon except a stretch of land that had helped him to eke out his existence. Hard pressed by poverty he went back from Jammu to Vessu where the Muslim killers snatched his life.

Raj Nath Dhar

Name: Raj Nath Dhar

Father's Name: Dina Nath Dhar

Date of Birth: 7.8.1931

Date of Assassination: 30.6.1990

Residence: Qutub-ub-dinpora, Alikadal, Srinagar

Survived by mother(70), sister(40), brother(32)

He was a retired person in his fifties. Some terrorists entered his house and fired at him. His old and ailing mother cried and screamed for assistance, but nobody turned up to comfort her in grief and depression. He was shifted to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar where he died for want of proper care and aid.

Zinda Lal Pandita

Name: Zinda Lal Pandita

Father's Name: Prakash Ram Pandita

Date of Birth: 4.4.1931

Date of Assassination: 6.10.1990

Residence: Bagatpora, Handwara

Survived by wife(50), son(30)

He was kidnapped from his residence and strangled with steel wires in an orchard and was said to be the handiwork of JKLF murderers.

Jagar Nath Pandita

Name: Jagar Nath Pandita

Father's Name: Ganesh Das Pandita

Date of Birth: 17.11.1943

Date of Assassination: 7.10.1990

Residence: Bagatpora, Handwara

Survived by mother(62), sons(23 and 20)

He was a widower and was kidnapped from his house and taken to the thick grooves of his own orchard where he was strangled with steel wires. His killing took place during the intervening night of 7th and 8th October, 1990.

Omkar Nath Wali

Name: Omkar Nath Wali

Father's Name: Parmanand Wali

Date of Birth: 4.5.1935

Date of Assassination: 2.1.1991

Residence: Chak-i-Rajwati, Vessu, Anantnag

Survived by wife(50), son(28), daughters(24 and 22)

He was an assistant sub-inspector of police posted at District Police Lines, Anantnag. His family was in Jammu when he was kidnappe and shot dead. No last rites were performed. No FIR was filed. It is alleged that his own colleagues in the Police Lines were responsible for his murder by being hand in glove with the JKLF hounds. His killing needs an enquiry.

Kanya Lal Peshin

Name: Kanya Lal Peshin

Father's Name: Kanth Ram Peshin

Date of Birth: 4.10.1937

Date of Assassination: 18/19.10.1991

Residence: Pazalpora, Bandipora

Survived by wife(48), sons(24 and 18), daughter(16)

He was a poor farmer and was kidnapped from his house at 9 in the night. He was taken 3 kilometres away from his own village and was brutally tortured. It is said that pins were driven into his nails and more than one metre of cloth was stuffed into his mouth to stifle him to death. His dead body was found at Ajar, Bandipora. He was said to have been killed by the assassins of Hizbul Mujahideen.

Gopi Nath Raina

Name: Gopi Nath Raina

Father's Name: Govind Ram Raina

Date of Birth: 1.1.1941

Date of Assassination: 7.7.1990

Residence: Manigam, Ganderbal

Survived by wife(45), daughters(28,20,17,15,12)

He was running a medical shop at Kangan and being a Pandit was suspected of having the credentials of an informer, an alibi to kill him. It was in his own shop that he was put to bullets. His brutal murder was owned by Hizbul Mujahideen through the Kashmir Times and the Aftab, two dailies published from Jammu and Srinagar respectively.

Ashok Kumar Bazaz

Name: Ashok Kumar Bazaz

Father's Name: Ram Joo Bazaz

Date of Birth:

Date of Assassination:

Residence: Baghi Sunder Balla Chattabal

Survived by wife and seven daughters(19,16,13,11,7,5,3)

He was in his thirties when he was shot dead by the Muslim terrorists. He was a petty shop-keeper dealing in groceries. He was accused of being an informer and an agent of India. As the father of seven daughters he should have been spared and shown compassion. But the terrorists emptied of such human empathies and values and thus reduced to the level of barbarity killed him in cold blood. The poor and miserable wife of the deceased asked the Muslim killers to massacre the whole family as their bread-earner had been snatched from them. She was told that they were spared to weep and wail and atone for the sins of having carried Kashmir to the fold of India.

Attar Singh

Name: Attar Singh

Father's Name: Fatch Singh

Date of Birth: 11.4.1929

Date of Assassination: 26.7.1990

Residence: Saimnoo, Kulagam

Survived by sons (36,30,20) daughters (28,26)

He was an ex-serviceman. He was suspected of being an informer. He was employed at the branch office of the Hindustan Petroleum in Pulwama. After his duty hours he was returning home and the armed Muslim gangsters shot him dead. No Sikh-Muslim terrorist pact could save him. When informed of the killing, Samranjit Singh Mann was said to have felt sorry for the failure of the unholy pact that he had forged with the Muslim killers.

Maheshwar Nath Bhat

Name: Maheshwar Nath Bhat

Father's Name: Zana Bhat

Date of Birth: 20.6.1921

Date of Assassination: 15.10.1990

Residence: Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar

Survived by wife(65), son(35), daughters(30,27,24)

It was exactly at 8 in the morning that the Muslim killers numbering three forcibly barged into his house and started making enquiries about his son-in-law, an officer in the Department of Forests. They were told that he had migrated to Jammu much

earlier and the fact of the matter was that he had returned to join his office on promotion as ACF at the behest and on the assurances of his Muslim colleagues with whom he had maintained close contacts. During the period of enquiries his son-in-law hid himself in a bath-room which he had bolted. Frustrated at not getting the prize catch the Muslim killers opened a volley of fire killing Maheshwar Nath on the spot, injuring his old and ailing wife who in a state of unconsciousness was hospitalised at Badami Bagh where she was given treatment and shifted to Jammu under security cover. His relation was also admitted to the same hospital where he succumbed to his bullet wounds.

Shiban Kishen Koul

Name: Shiban Kishen Koul

Father's Name: Radha Krishen Koul

Date of Birth: 13.5.1953

Date of Assassination: 15/16.7.1990

Residence: Ashmuji, Kulgam, Anantnag

Survived by wife(35), mother(55), son(15), daughter(13)

He was a primary school teacher teaching Muslim learners with all his dedication. But he was a threat to Islam and hence was slaughtered on the uneven and pot-holed paths of his native hamlet. His father was also slaughtered the next day. His assassins were his neighbours whom he might have taught the first alphabets. This was how he was recompensed by the Muslim ungratefals.

Dilip Kumar

Name: Dilip Kumar

Father's Name: Mohan Lal

Date of Birth: 8.7.1962

Date of Assassination: 19.5.1990

Residence: Mujamarag, Shopian Pulwama

Survived by mother(55), brothers(26,18,15)

He was un-employed and unmarried too. His father had died long back and the responsibility of the family and its management was on his green shoulders. He possessed a bit of ancestral land and looked after it to eke out an existence. But he was a Kafir and therefore could not be spared. The Muslim killers knocked at his door and as the atmosphere was surcharged with fear and panic his mother came out to tell the killers that Dilip was not home. But that would not break their bloody resolve. They waited outside the house for a while and ultimately broke open the door and dragged him out and carried him off as a prize catch. His mother beating her breast followed the killers who foul-mouthed the hapless lady. His brother rushed to the nearby police station for help, but no help came from that quarter. Dilip was extremely tortured. His dentures were hammered out and twelve bullets pumped into him and he was hung from a tree with a letter pinned on his chest. The letter said that any person who dared lift the body would be paid one lakh. His body was cremated by police.

Manmohan Bachloo

Name: Manmohan Bachloo

Father's Name: Janki Nath Bachloo

Date of Birth: 5.12.1963

Date of Assassination: 18.5.1990

Residence: Qazihama, Baramulla

Survived by Father(67), mother(56), sisters(25,23,19)

He was in his twenties and was posted at Karnah as a Postal Assistant in the Postal Department. He came to his native town on a holiday. His having left for Baramulla was conveyed through their accomplices to the Muslim killers who were waiting for his arrival. In fact one of the killers was said to be following him from Karnah itself. When he reached home, a killer called at his house and carried him along for a cup of tea at a tea-shop in the heart of Baramulla town. Unsuspecting Manmohan accompanied his Muslim friend with whom he had frisked and frolicked in his boyhood days. When he entered the tea shop, other killers waiting for him hit him with bullets. He died then and there only. It is a classical case of treachery practised by the Muslim.

Veer Ji Bhat

Name: Veer Ji Bhat

Father's Name: D.N.Bhat

Date of Birth: 31.1.59

Date of Assassination: 13.5.1990

Residence: Nagam, Badgam

Survived by wife(30), daughter(5), son(3), Father(60), mother(58)

He was a young man of bubbling spirits with a bright career. He was employed as a Junior Engineer in the State Irrigation Department and was posted at Shopian. He was a social activist helping everyone in distress and difficulty. On the fateful day he was out in the market of his locality. He talked to his friends in his usual aplomb. Suddenly a bunch of hounds arrived in a car and sprayed a shower of bullets over him. Despite profuse bleeding he did not give in and caught hold of one of the killers. But his armed accomplices put bullets into him felling him in his own pool of blood. The killers ran off. It happened in presence

of everybody. The Pandits totally scared bolted their doors and windows and the Muslim majority flaunted V-signs in all hilarity. He was carried to SMHS Hospital where a doctor operated upon him and declared him out of danger. But after half an hour a man from the theatre declared him dead. Removing the white cloth from his face his relatives found him snow white and that triggered the charge that the accomplices of the killers nestling the Hospital had drained out his blood.

Ashok Kumar

Name: Ashok Kumar

Father's Name: Basker Nath

Date of Birth: 2.5.1963

Date of Assassination: 13.5.1990

Residence: Pulwama

Survived by father(55), mother(54), sister(30 and 24)

He was unemployed and unmarried too. He was kidnapped by the hounds of Hizbul Mujjahideen who were imparted first lessons in Muslim bigotry by the beard flaunting Ali Shah Gilani. His hands and feet were broken and was taken to the main crossing of the road. The hounds replicating Nadir Shah and Mohmmad Gori plucked out his eye-balls with iron rods in presence of hundreds of Muslims who were seen relishing the barbarity inflicted on a Kafir. Ultimately he was put to a barrage of bullets killing him in no time. Among the spectators there was a bard who sang "Islam is glorious and great."

Ajay Kapoor

Name: Ajay Kapoor

Father's Name: Shiva Nath Kapoor

Date of Birth: 16.7.1940

Date of Assassination: 1.12.1989

Residence: Old Postoffice, Sr. Gunj Srinagar

Survived by wife(47), son(25), daughter(15)

He was a God fearing businessman. His bright and genial looking countenance would be usually marked with a tilak. It was in his own locality where his family had been living from generations that he was showered a volley of bullets. Groaning and moaning he fell dead. It was a cold blooded murder. His dead body was not lifted for hours or end.

Surinder Kumar Raina

Name: Surinder Kumar Raina

Father's Name: Jia Lal Raina

Date of Birth: 19.3.1967

Date of Assassination: 2.5.1990

Residence: Tullamulla, Ganderbal

Survived by sisters(35,21), brother(27,14)

He was in his twenties and an orphan. He was a lift-man in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura and was kidnapped while performing his duties. All Muslims present on the scene presented a spectacle of cheer and song. He was put to bullets on a road named after the legendary physician, Ali Jan, who despite his brilliance in the field of medicine allowed the Medical Institute, Soura to get transformed into a snake-pit of Muslim bigotry and fanaticism.

Surinder Kumar Kouli

Name: Surinder Kumar koul

Father's Name: Som Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 4.5.1971

Date of Assassination: 26.8.1991

Residence: Batagund, Handwara

Survived by father(50), mother(45), brother(30), sister(33)

The whole family had shifted to Jammu in the wake of Muslim terrorism. The young boy at the age of twenty, therefore, a green "horn, had received a call-letter for an interview for the post of a teacher for which he had applied when he was home. He is said to have been in contact with his Muslim friends who had encouraged him to return at least for the interview and assured him of full safety. Against the advice of his parents he left for Srinagar. When he de-boarded the bus at Srinagar, the same Muslim hounds who had assured him of safety kidnapped him. Putting him to detestable pains and agonies, he was finally put to bullets at Langet. What a treachery!

Ravinder Kumar Pandita

Name: Ravinder Kumar Pandita

Father's Name: Nanak Chand Pandita

Date of Birth: 4.10.1958

Date of Assassination: 25.4.1990

Residence: Mattan, Anantnag

Survived by wife(30), mother(60), daughters(4,6,6(twins))

He was working in the Telecommunication Department on daily wages. He was poor and bereft and lived in absolute indigence. But he was Ravinder Kumar, therefore a Kafir and agent of India. While returning home from his work-

place, the Muslim terrorists lying in wait for him shot him from close range. He fell dead then and there and in utter glee the killers danced over his dead body and the murderous scene was witnessed by hundreds of Muslims who could be seen emptied of human compassion though taught as a religious value.

Bushan Lal Koul

Name: Bushan Lal Koul

Father's Name: Shridhar Koul

Date of Birth: 14.6.1948

Date of Assassination: 16.5.1990

Residence: Amnool, Kulagam, Anantnag

Survived by wife (37), son (19)

He was a government employee. He was kidnapped and strangled with steel wires. He was allegedly killed by the Hizbul Mujahideen hounds.

D.P. Khazanchi

Name: D.P. Khazanchi

Father's Name: Damodar Khazmanchi

Date of Birth: 6.10.1939

Date of Assassination: 6.10.90

Residence: Kaniya Kadal, Srinagar

Survived by wife (48), son (22), daughter (18)

He was a professor of Physics, a good teacher, cool, calm and soft spoken. But as ill-luck would have it he was lost to sanity. As he would be raving and loitering about, the Muslim killers pumped bullets into him killing him instan-

taneously. The militarised Muslim bigotry did not spare even an insane for the fact of his being a kafir and threat to Islam.

Girija Kumari Tiku

Name: Girija Kumari Tiku

Husband's Name: Kanya Lal Tiku

Date of Birth: 15.2.1969

Date of Assassination: 11.6.1990

Residence: Arigam, Bandipora, Baramulla

Survived by mother (60), husband(25), son and daughter(4 and 2)

She was a laboratory assistant posted at Government High School, Trehgam. She had gone to the school to collect her salary. After collecting her salary, she called on her Muslim colleague in the same village. Her movements were watched by the Muslim terrorists who kidnapped her from the house of her Muslim friend. None protested as she was a Hindu Kafir the possession of whose body was halal (lawful). She was stripped, gangraped, placed on a mechanical saw and chopped into two equal halves. The frenzied Muslim terrorists committed the grisly crime to establish a political order as conceived in their Nizam-e-Mustafa. It was a monstrous and barbarous killing.

All brands of human rights activists with blinkers on their eyes failed to notice the gory murder of Girijia Tickoo. But, Salman Khurshid in his book "Beyond Terrorism" had the grace not to conceal the barbarous murder of the Hindu lady by her Muslim killers who have revived the history of Muslim tyrants.

Writes he, "Girija Tickoo of Bandipora worked as a laboratory assistant at the Girls High School in Trehgam, Kupwara. She was abducted in June, 1990, gangraped for several days and then shred into pieces on a bar and saw mill."⁴¹

Usha Kumari Koul

Name: Usha Kumari Koul

Husband's Name: Rathinder Koul

Date of Birth: 13.6.1949

Date of Assassination: 14.10.1990

Residence: Sehyan, Ali Kadal, Srinagar

Survived by father-in-law (79), mother-in-law (68), son(10)

She was employed as a workman in the Watch Factory at Zainakot. On the fateful day she started her daily chores at 7 in the morning. Suddenly she found her husband drenched in blood while he was coming down the stairs. She cried and screamed when she noticed the gun-totting Muslim killers leaving the portals of her house. They returned from the gate and pumped bullets into her killing her in no time. The Muslim murderers had entered her house stealthily and gone straight to the room of her husband and sprayed him over with bullets. The couple was murdered in cold blood.

Sarla Bhat

Name: Sarla Bhat

Father's Name: Shamboo Nath Bhat

Date of Birth: 30.9.1966

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Date of Assassination: 18/19.4.1990

Residence: New Qazi Bagh, Anantnag

Survived by father (53), mother(48) brothers (26,18) sister (21).

She was a nurse working in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura and was suspected of being an informer. She once by chance while on duty was said to have overheard the conversation between Dr. Abdul Ahad Guru, the kingpin of terrorism in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura and Hamid Sheikh, Deputy Commander of JKLF. She was said to have been eliminated at the behest of Dr. Guru who had asked her to go on leave but had not obliged him. She was tortured and gangraped for five days and her dead body was thrown on the main road of the Omar colony. Her body bore multiple marks of violence, injuries, burn marks, and four bullet shots. The post-mortem report confirmed that she had been gangraped before putting her to bullets.

No security was provided by the government authorities working in cahoots with the terrorists when she was carried to the cremation ground for last rites. Bombs were hurled on the relatives of the victim on way to the crematorium. Even the house of the bereaved family at Anantnag was not spared. It was put afire in all vengeance.

Jia Lal Kaw

Name: Jia Lal Kaw

Father's Name: Ganesh Kaw

Date of Birth: 4.7.1925

Date of Assassination: 8.5.90

Residence: Kawpora, Handwara

Survived by wife (50), son(23) daughters(18,16)

On the fateful day he was sipping a cup of tea in the warm company of his family. A squad of Muslim terrorists wielding guns barged into his house and forcibly took him away alongwith his minor son. The members of his family begged of the heartless Muslims to set them free but their pathetic pleas could have no impact on them. For four days they were brutally tortured and finally killed. Their bodies bore burn marks. Their eye-balls were gouged out. Jia Lal's tongue was chopped off and his face was disfigured. His hair was plucked out. Both the legs of the minor were amputated with an axe. A note was placed on the bodies that anybody daring to lift the bodies would be put to the same fate.

And Jia lal was adamant not to leave Kashmir as he considered it crown of India.

Prof. K.L.Ganjoo Mrs. Prana Ganjoo

Name: K.L. Ganjoo/Prana Ganjoo

Father's Name/Hubsand's Name: N.N. Ganjoo/k/L/ Ganjoo

Date of Birth: 4.1.1942

Date of Assassination: 4.11.1990

Residence: Sopore

Survived by son(6), daughter (8)

He was an agro-scientist and worked at the Agriculture college, Sopore. He had wide contacts with Muslims and as a teacher had taught and initiated hosts of learners. Pandits fleeing from their homes and hearths had failed to make an impress on him as he trusted the hollow assurances of his friends and students. He had been to Nepal on an assignment for a short period and returned to his native town in March, 1990. His wife, Prana Ganjoo, and his nephew had accompanied him to Nepal. Two

employees of the college went in a Jeep to receive him on the out-skirts of the town. All the three boarded the Jeep and the moment they reached the middle of the Sopore bridge they were pushed out of the vehicle. The professor was sprayed over with bullets and hurled into the fast-flowing waters of the Jehlum to meet his watery grave. His nephew was given two options of either jumping into the river or witnessing the torture that his aunt would be put to. Preferring the first option he jumped into the river and fast flowing current of the river buffeted him to safety. The professor's body riddled with bullets was found on the shores of the river.

His wife was barbarically treated. She was gangraped and her breasts were chopped off and finally put to bullets. But the police sources have yet to confirm her killing.

Dina Nath Mujoo

Name: Dina Nath Mujoo

Father's Name: Tota Joo Mujoo

Date of Birth: 8.8.1910

Date of Assassination: 6/7.4.1990

Residence: Rawalpura, Srinagar

Survived by wife (80), sons (52 and 42).

He was one among the galaxy of Kashmiri Pandit head-masters who had made history for their calibre and scholarship. Throughout his distinguished career as a teacher he had taught thousands of Muslim scholars in the schools he had served. He had the achievements of a scholar, profundity of a philosopher and understanding of a teacher. He was a life long member of the Women's Welfare Trust, Srinagar which has a tremendous history of contribution to the cause of Women's education. Kashmir Shaivism, Theosophy and J.Krishnamurti were his *forte*.

A cruel terrorist barged into his room at dead of night, switched off the lights and stabbed him on the left side of his chest and gashed his throat. His wife who is old, weak and infirm, heard her husband moan and started yelling out for help. The same brute kicked her and pushed her under the bed where she lay unconscious. Though bleeding and emaciated Mujoo mustered his guts to come to the window of the room and called out for his neighbour, Zaffar Ahmed, who is a Police Inspector. He must have heard the eighty year old man cry and scream, but how could he come to the aid of a Hindu Kafir whose elimination is a religious act ? Placing his head in the lap of his semi-blind wife who by then was slightly conscious, he bled to death. His assassin is believed to be at large.

Naveen Sapru

Name: Naveen Sapru

Father's Name: S.N. Sapru

Date of Birth: 14 Feb.1953

Date of Assassination: 17 Feb,1990

Residence: Babapora, Habba Kadal Srinagar

Survived by wife(30), mother(60), sons(8and3)

He was an inspector in the Telecommunications Department, Srinagar. While returning home at 5 in the evening the Muslim terrorists lying in wait spotted him near Kaniyakadal and marched towards him in all gusto. They straightaway started putting him to a shower of bullets. He started bleeding profusely and fell down. The hounds who had planned his death in a mosque did not kill him by pumping a bullet at a sensitive spot. They made him to writhe in pain and agony and die by inches. Ultimately he died from excessive bleeding. The macabre scene was enacted in daylight. It was witnessed by hundreds of Muslims

who did not intervene but seemed to enjoy the death of a non-Muslim to the hilt. An old Pandit lady who chanced to pass by the roadside begged of the killers to spare his life, but the Muslim hounds pushed her away in brute violence. When the dead body of Navin Sapru was carried to the cremation ground for last rites, the hounds boarded a truck and were seen dancing in absolute joy and mirthfulness.

Mrs Prana Ganjoo

Name: Mrs Prana Ganjoo

Husband's Name: Jawahar Lal Ganjoo

Date of Birth: 10.4.1945

Date of Assassination: 17.6.1990

Residence: Malapora, Habakadal Srinagar

Survived by son (27), daughters (30,25,19)

The Muslim killers intruded in her house and shot her to death at Malapora in broad daylight. The entire neighbourhood fell into gloom as she was young and blooming and looked after her family with love and dedicaion.

Prof. Nila Kanth Raina

Name: Nila Kanth Raina, M.A (History), M.A. (Economics), M.A. (political Science), B.Ed.

Father's Name: J.N. Raina

Date of Birth: 7.8.1924

Date of Assassination: 30.6.1990

Residence: Khankai Sokhta, Srinagar

Survived by wife(64) sons (40,36,30,28), daughter (26)

He was a veteran teacher with an enviable record of academics. The Muslim killers killed him in the early hours of morning when he alongwith his family was boarding a truck to buzz off his native place. The terrorists were none other than his students whom he had initiated to drive away the brute in them, but despite his initiation the brute remained to take his toll. A full exercise was undertaken by the Muslim killers prior to his killing. All Muslims in the neighbourhood complied with the commands of the terrorists to keep their doors and windows open so that after the gruesome murder they would melt away into their residences. Nobody reported the preparations for his killing to the nearby police station though that would be a mere formality. Raina was shot at neck and chest and fell down writhing in pain and agony. Nobody said a word about his cold-blooded murder. Instead the death was celebrated as a victory for Islam and its militarised Jihad.

In his capacity as a celebrated teacher he entered hundreds of Muslim homes to teach and humanise the wards of Muslim parents who did not shed a single tear on his death or even offer condolences.

Jawahar Lal Ganjoo

Name: Jawahar Lal Ganjoo

Father's Name: M.N. Ganjoo

Date of Birth: 15.7.1940

Date of Assassination: 17.6.1990

Residence: Malapora, Habba Kadal Srinagar

Survived by mother (75), son(27), daughters (28,26,20)

He was a small-scale businessman. He was killed along with his wife by the Muslim killers, who battered their way into his house and pumped bullets into him killing him on the spot.

Mrs Durga Koul

Name: Durga Koul

Husband's Name: Badri Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 8.10.1934

Date of Assassination: 17.6.1990

Residence: Malapora, Habba Kadal Srinagar

Survived by mother(75) son (30), daughter (28)

She was a middle-aged house-wife. The Muslim assassins killed her in the house of Jawahar Lal Ganjoo by pumping a barrage of bullets into her. Her husband, Durga Nath Koul, was also killed in the same massacre. The Muslim pathology touched its apogee when the killers footed a dance in all mirthfulness outside the house. Instead of mourning the entire locality echoed murmurs of Joy over the group massacre of hapless Pandits.

Mrs Pitti Koul

Name: Pitti Koul

Husband's Name: Makhan Lal Koul

Date of Birth: 1.3.1938

Date of Assassination: 7.11.1990

Residence: Mandir Bagh, Srinagar

Survived by husband(53) son (26), daughters (28) mother(70)

She was a school teacher and with the spurt in militancy she had migrated to Jammu alongwith her family. As the Muslim murderers claiming to operate in the name of Is-

lam found very few victims among the Kashmiri Pandits for the fact that they had migrated enmasse to various parts of the country, they propagated a ruse through their Muslim collaborators that the Pandits could return to the valley to take back their house-hold goods lying in their homes. Pitti and her husband were caught in the ruse. Both of them left for Srinagar to retrieve the goods left behind in their warm and cosy home. She went to her home leaving behind her husband at Indira Nagar, Srinagar considered a safer zone. She cried and wailed to find her home ravaged and plundered. It was being used as a sanctuary by the Muslim killers. As she moved from one room of her house to the other, the killers shot at her in the head. She suddenly ceased to be. The Muslim neighbourhood was ensured of the booties in the form of the goods left over within the house and the appropriation of the house itself. She was cremated under security cover.

Satish Tickoo

Name: Satish Tickoo

Father's Name: Prithvi Nath Tickoo

Date of Birth: 26.1.1962

Date of Assassination: 2.2.1990

Residence: Karfalli Mohalla, Srinagar

Survived by father(70), mother (65), sister(18)

He was a social activist and exerted his every nerve to assist the Pandits in difficulty or distress. He was doing business. He was quite popular with Muslims as well. Exactly at 7.30 in the morning of the fateful day two Muslim killers called at his house. His sister smelled a rat and avoided them. The killers went away but were hiding in the lanes and bye-lanes in which the locality was sunk. When informed of somebody asking for him, Satish left his home

to see them. He peeped into the lanes and in a moment a pistol shot hit him. On hearing the bullet sound the whole family rushed out into the lane and found their son lying in a pool of blood.

He was rushed to SMHS Hospital which was less of a hospital and more of a terrorist den. The doctors elated at the murder of a Kafir declared him dead. Despite security perils, the then governor, Jagmohan, visited the family which was heavily hit by the killing of a youngman only at twenty-eight.

Rajinder Kumar Tiku

Name: Rajinder Kumar Tiku

Father's Name: P.L.Tiku

Date of Birth: 16.1.1962

Date of Assassination: 16.6.90

Residence: Batapora, Shopian, Anantnag

Survived by father(46), grand-father(72) grand-mother(64)

He was a young man in twenties and was not married. He was undergoing training in accountancy in the sub-district hospital, Shopian. He was a post-graduate in Education. While returning from the hospital he sat at a shop for a chat with the shop-keeper whom he knew at first hand. The killers already lying in wait showered him with bullets felling him in his own pool of blood. It was a broad daylight murder. In the wake of his killing the entire population of Pandits in the area felt panicked and the pace of exodus that had already begun got accelerated.

Satish Kumar Raina

Name: Satish Kumar Raina

Father's Name: Niranjan Nath Raina

Date of Birth: 6.9.1966

Date of Assassination: 25.6.90

Residence: Gupta Ganga, Ishbar, Nishat

Survived by father (50), brother(16,10) mother(48)

He was in his twenties and was yet to be married. A teacher's son, he had passed a course in welding from I.I.T Srinagar and was unemployed. He boarded a bus for the city and was kidnapped soon after he reached the city. He was brutally tortured, strangled and then hacked into pieces. His hacked body huddled in a sack was recovered by a police posse at Ganderbal. His last rites were performed by police. The miserable parents wailed and wept, but were not given the hacked body. The Muslim murderers were adding the real chapter to the gory book of Kashmiriayat. The papers reported that his ghastly death was owned by the hounds of Hizbul Mujhideen.

Jagar Nath Koul

Name: Jagar Nath Koul

Father's Name: Ram Chand Koul

Date of Birth: 7.8.1940

Date of Assassination: 20.4.1990

Residence: Qazigund, Anantnag

Survived by wife (46) mother (90) sons (30,26)

He was a head constable No.272, posted at the Police Lines Anantnag. He was put on duty at Khanabal crossing. The Muslim terrorists working in collaboration with the police forces pumped bullets into him. He fell drenched in blood and was carried to the hospital where he died for want of

proper medical care and attention. It is said that there was immense jubilation in Police lines as most of his colleagues were fully aware of his fate.

Ramesh Peer

Name: Ramesh Peer

Father's Name: Gopi Nath Peer

Date of Birth: 14.5.1961

Date of Assassination: 6.5.90

Residence: Vicharnag, Srinagar

Survived by father(65) mother(57) three brothers, three sisters.

He was a junior executive in OAK India Ltd. He was not married. He was forcibly lifted from his residence and brutally slaughtered.

Bansi Lal Raina

Name: Bansi Lal Raina

Father's Name: Prem Nath Raina

Date of Birth: 14.3.1963

Date of Assassination: 27.5.1990

Residence: Chattergul, Anantnag

Survived by mother (55), brothers (8,4,2-1/2)

He was a petty shop-keeper in a distant village of Anantnag. The Muslim terrorists kidnapped him and put him to a severe torture. It was after 16 hours that his body was found tied with ropes and rags. He bore deep wounds and cuts. His face was swollen and marked with blood stains.

Ramesh Razdan

Name: Ramesh Razdan

Father's Name: P.N.Razdan

Date of Birth: 8.2.1952

Date of Assassination: 25.7.1990

Residence: Naidyar, Rainawari, Srinagar

Survived by wife (37), daughter (14), son (6)

He was a central government employee. He was kidnapped from his residence and since then there is no trace of him. His wife has been contacting various government agencies to know the fate of her husband. She has contacted the police station at Rainawari, but there has been no satisfactory response to her queries. She has sent communications to the Resident Commissioner in Delhi, but to her dismay he has not been of any material help. She has filed an FIR with CRPF under a pseudonym for fear of retaliation from the terrorists, but nothing concrete has been conveyed to her. She shot a representation to the then Chief Secretary, J&K Government, who had not the courtesy to reply to her under his own seal and signature just to allay her concerns. She was scribbled some vague information through a junior officer. There was a report published in the Kashmir Times about an unidentified body having been recovered from the Dal Lake. It is presumed that it could be the body of Ramesh Razdan as he lived at Rainawari on the shores of the Lake. The terrorists might have tortured him to death and thrown his body into the Lake waters. But the wife of the killed in her maddening grief never believes that her husband is dead. She continues to be in search of her lost husband and the J&K Government with a dehumanised visage has not come to her assistance.

Prithvi Nath Koul

Name: Prithivi Nath Koul

Father's Name: Raghu Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 14.4.1941

Date of Assassination: 5.6.90

Residence: Damhal Hanjipora, Kulagam

Survived by wife (45) daughter(20) sons (25,19)

He was a class-IV employee of the Postal Department. He was kidnapped and killed by strangulation near New Nirhama Bridge, Damhal Hanjipora. He was postmortemed at the Damhal Hanjipora hospital. An FIR was lodged at the local police station, but was not registered by the station House Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, who is alleged to be involved in the killing of the hapless Pandit living in sheer poverty. It was only after lots of pressure by the surviving members of the killed that an FIR was finally registered bearing No. 42/90 dated 7.8.90

Brij Nath Shah

Name: Brij Nath Shah

Father's Name: Shridhar Shah

Date of Birth: 8.12.1938

Date of Assassination: 27.4.1990

Residence: Ashram Sadhu Ganga, Kandikhas, Handwara

He was an unassuming recluse living on tenter-hooks within the premises of the hermitage(ashram) popularly known as Saadha Malun which had lots of land attached to

it. Prior to his killing many an attack was launched upon the hermitage by Muslim intolerants with a view to grabbing the shrine. But Brij Nath everytime frustrated their moves. Once he is said to have repulsed such an attack by thousands of Muslims by smearing his body with red oxide thereby posing himself as a fearful apparition. The mob was said to have been led by a local Mullah who through such an attack on the Hindu shrine was paving his road to heaven. With the rise in terrorist spate Shah was kidnapped and tortured. Shah had his name tattooed on his fore-arm. The flesh at the spot was peeled off. His mouth had been stitched and he was strangled to death. The rope round this neck could be visibly seen when his body was recovered.

Chaman Lal Pandita

Name: Chaman Lal Pandita

Father's Name: Maheshwar Nath Pandita

Date of Birth: 4.9.1955

Date of Assassination: 21.5.1990

Residence: Kawoosa, Badgam

Survived by wife (30), mother (65), daughter (6)

He was a school teacher posted at Mazhama in the district of Badgam. He was kidnapped and brutally tortured. His body bore multiple torture marks. He was hanged to death. His family moved from pillar to post to trace him out. Ultimately police informed the grieving family of his gruesome assassination by hanging. Chaman Lal's Muslim neighbours had dissuaded him from abandoning his home. He was promised full protection. But when he cried for help, nobody came forward. His killing was a victory for Islam.

Vasudev Pandita

Name: Vasudev Pandita

Father's Name: Gopal Pandita

Date of Birth: 8.7.1941

Date of Assassination: 11.8.1990

Residence: Rohama, Baramulla

Survived by wife (48), daughter (30), sons (36,34,18)

The Muslim killers barged into his house and pumped bullets into him. He fell wallowing in his own blood, was dragged like a carcass for a long distance and in presence of the entire village strangulated to death. He was assured of protection by the Muslims but on the fateful day he faced hostility from all quarters.

Ram Nath Koul

Name: Ram Nath Koul

Father's Name: Dina Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 22.5.1935

Date of Assassination: 5.8.1990

Residence: Malapora, Habbakadal, Srinagar

Survived by wife (50) daughters (30,25), son (28)

He was a head constable No.12515. He was placed on duty on road-side. The conspiracy to get him killed was said to have been hatched by his colleagues. When off duty he went to his residence. Hardly had he changed when the Muslim killers entered his room and sprayed him over with bullets. His body bore multiple bullet marks. It was a cruel murder of a Kashmiri Pandit.

Hridey Nath Bhat

Name: Hridey Nath Bhat

Father's Name: Gasha Ram Bhat

Date of Birth: 6.4.1937

Date of Assassination: 10.9.1990

Residence: Wuyann, Pulwama

Survived by wife (45) daughter(19,13) son (20,14)

He was kidnapped and straightway slaughtered.

Ashok Kumar Pandita

Name: Ashok Kumar Pandita

Father's Name: Jagar Nath Pandita

Date of Birth: 1.4.1963

Date of Assassination: 12.6.1990

Residence: Sofi Haman, Sopore

Survived by father (48), brothers (22 and 17), sisters (15,13,9)

He was a youngman in his twenties. He had a future ahead. But Muslim armed bigotry had drawn a blue-print for the total massacre of Pandits. He had yet to partake of the joys of life and was unmarried. His own friends whisked him away and shot him dead leaving his parents distraught, despondent and miserable.

Omkar Nath Raina

Name: Omkar Nath Raina

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Father's Name: Gwashlal Raina

Date of Birth: 13.6.1949

Date of Assassination: 11.5.1990

Residence: Devi-angan, Srinagar

Survived by wife (34), daughter(9), mother (60)

He lived at the foot-hills of the Hari Parbat and would be in the front-ranks of fighting the vicious forces that always rallied to occupy and grab the lands attached with the ancient shrine of Chakreshwari. He was a watchful witness of all the parades that the budding Muslim terrorists would organise on the hill-top. The government of the day either connived at or collaborated. One evening his house was stoned till late in the night. He being the only person staying in the area surrounded by Muslims felt Jittery and fear-stricken. Next day he made up his mind to march out to unknown destinations. The Muslim killers having put him on notice were determined to take his toll. He took out his family and his old mother to board a bus for Jammu and in the way he was pounced upon and plucked away from his family. He was tortured and beaten. Burning cigarette bits were used to agonise him. His face was disfigured and his body was recovered at Alijan Road, Soura.

Ramesh Kumar Raina

Name: Ramesh Kumar Raina

Father's Name: Niranjan Nath

Date of Birth: 4.7.1959

Date of Assassination: 28.5.1990

Residence: Kralyar, Rainawari Srinagar

Survived by wife (25), daughters (4 in number), father (57), mother (50)

He was running a small shop in his own locality. He was kidnapped from his home in broad daylight. His father ran from pillar to post to trace him out. No clues could be got for days on end. Finally the family was informed that he was slaughtered and his corpse was hurled into the Jehlum. He was allegedly killed by the hounds of the Student Liberation Front (SLF).

Shanker Nath Tiku

Name: Shanker Nath Tiku

Father's Name: Gasha Lal Tiku

Date of Birth: 4.8.1920

Date of Assassination: 20.8.1990

Residence: Badgam

Survived by wife (60), daughters (37,35,21)

He was fairly old and was a farmer. The killers attempted to kidnap him from his residence, but failed in their sinister design as the old man gave them a slip. After remaining away for some time he returned to his home. The killers had not given up their witch-hunt. They were waiting for their kill. They saw him entering the portals of his house and suddenly pounced on him and whisked him away. The womenfolk cried and screamed and sought every Muslim neighbour's help in getting him retrieved from the clutches of the butchers. But all in vain. He could not be traced for days together. Some villagers informed the family that he had been hanged at Wahaibpora. The police recovered his body and cremated him within the premises of the Police-station at Beerva. The family was said to have been shifted to Jammu under security cover.

Jawahar Lal Bhat

Name: Jawahar Lal Bhat

Father's Name: Vasudev Bhat

Date of Birth: 8.6.1933

Date of Assassination: 5.7.1990

Residence: Darbagh, Harwan, Srinagar

Survived by wife (55), son (35,15)

He had a flourishing seed business and was reluctant to quit his village though pandits under panic and threat of life had migrated to the zones across the Bannihal tunnel. On the assurance of his Muslim neighbour he stayed back in the house. As fear was in air and had gripped him, he spent his nights in the neighbour's residence who had assured him full safely. On the fateful night ten masked Muslim killers forced their entry into the house where he was seen just going to bed. They dragged him out, took him to his own farm and pumped multiple bullets into him. His family searched for him and were shocked to see him wallowing in his own pool of blood. He was cremated under police protection and his family members were shifted to a hotel in Srinagar where from they were sent to Jammu under security cover. The neighbour was in league with his killers. How fake the assurance was?

D.N.Chowdhary

Name: D.N. Chowdhary

Father's Name: Ram Chand Chowdhary

Date of Birth: June, 1935

Date of Assassination: 9.8.1990

Residence: Indira Nagar, Srinagar

Survived by wife (51) son's (28,25), father (X) mother (X)

He was the manager of the cement factory at Wuyan. He was kidnapped from his office in presence of three Muslim officers who could have intervened to save his life, but did not. The brutalities that were inflicted on the genial tempered chowdhary were monstrous. His hands were broken with hammers and his tongue was chopped off. His whole face was mutilated and scarred by branding it with a red-hot iron-press. His eye balls were plucked out. His body was thrown at a nearby village, Lethapora on Srinagar-Anantnag highway. He was kidnapped on 8th August, 1990 and the next day his wife floated an appeal to the Hizbul Mujahideen hounds for his safe release through 'Srinagar Times'. Her appeal was rejected on the grounds that he was an Indian agent and on 11th August his body was recovered from roadside.

Chuni Lal Shalla

Father's Name : Shyam Lal Shalla

Date of Birth : 4.7.1939

Date of Assassination : 1.5.1990

Residence : Seerjagire, Sopore, Baramulla

Survived by wife (43), sonu (7), daughter (9), father (68), mother (65)

He was an inspector of police posted near Handwara. He was returning home in a bus which he had boarded at the bus-stand. An accomplice of the killers, said to be a policeman, a Muslim, accompanied him right from his place of posting. The Muslim gangsters were already informed and aware of his having left in a bus for Baramulla. They asked for Chuni Lal when the bus was about to leave Langet, a station on the highway and the accomplice in the bus im-

mediately identified him. They dragged him out of the bus, whisked him away and tortured him for a number of days. He was chopped into pieces, huddled into a sack and thrown on the streets of Baramulla. A JKLF tag was placed on it forbidding anyone to pick it up. He was cremated under police protection and the family shifted to Jammu. His innocent blood has been screaming for justice. It is also said that the policeman himself unsheathed a dagger and slashed off his two cheeks sporting Jamaat-i-Islami type beard. He along with other terrorists battered his face with rods and sticks.

Lassa Koul

Name : Lassa Koul

Father's Name : Pt. Raghee Nath Koul

Date of birth : March, 1943

Date of assassination : 13.2.1990

Residence : Bemina, Srinagar

Survived by wife (45), son (17), daughter (19)

He was extremely cool, calm and soft tempered. His behaviour unto people in and outside his office was such as would not have earned him an enemy. His cultured demeanour and suavy had won him maximum friends and well wishers among the Muslims. But with the rise of tidal wave of Muslim bigotry he was projected as the enemy of Islam responsible for launching a cultural aggression on the Muslims through the programmes telecast from the Television centre, Srinagar which he headed as its director.

It was late in the evening that Koul left the premises of the Television centre to call on his old and ailing parents living in the Bemina colony on the outskirts of the city. The killers were awaiting his arrival as it is alleged that some of their accomplices in the centre had informed them of his departure. No sooner did he step into the door of his house than he was showered with bullets killing him on the

spot. Koul could not see and talk to his parents whom he served dutifully. His brutal assasssination sent shock-waves not only into the government circles but also into the Kashmiri Pandit minority. The pace of exodus got accelerated which had begun the day pandits perceived a nexus between the terrorists and government of the day. The Union Home Minister and Information and Broadcasting Minister flew to Srinagar to offer their condolences to the bereaved family. Shoukat Bakshi of the JKLF is said to be his killer who during interrogation revealed that Koul was eliminated at the behest of Aman Ullah Khan based in Pakistan.

The Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar is alleged to be infested with the accomplices and collaborators of the Muslim terrorists. The file replete with the sinister details regarding some officials of the centre and its over-all functioning has been moving from one Prime Minister to another but amazingly none has acted to cleanse the centre of the gross anti-national elements.

Ashok Kumar Qazi

Name : Ashok Kumar Qazi

Father's Name : S.N. Qazi

Date of Birth :

Date of Assassination : 24.12.1990

Residence : Sheshyar, Habbakadal Srinagar

Survived by

He was a well known social activist and had wide contacts with people of varied shades. He possessed tremendous organisational skills and that was how he had emerged as the organising secretary of the organisation led by H.N.Jattu. With a spurt in the killings of Kashmiri Pandits

Jattu had established contacts with the kingpins of the murderous campaign asking them to explain their attitude unto Pandits and he was silenced by the brutal killing of Ashok Kumar Qazi.

Qazi was surrounded by a pack of Muslim hounds when he was found in the local market doing some shopping. He was shot in his knees, fell down in utter agonising state and started screaming for help from all present on the scene. He was thoroughly known to all the Muslim shopkeepers who never felt kindly to intervene with a view to saving him from the Muslim butchers. They tenaciously held that his killers were fighting for Islam which meant death for the Kafirs. The Muslim killers led by Bitta Karte drew pathological pleasure from Qazi's agonies and in sheer glee started singing and dancing. They plucked out his hair, slapped him incessantly in the face and spat at him out of absolute contempt. One of the Muslim brutes opened his trousers, flaunted his genitals and pissed over him. Meanwhile the siren of a police jeep could be heard from a distance and the killers pierced him with a barrage of bullets. They melted away as victors in the Muslim dominated locality and Qazi's bullet-riddled body was lying for hours together on the road covered with blood-stained snow.

Dilip Singh

Name : Dilip Singh

Father's Name : Prem Singh

Date of Birth : 4.8.1943

Date of Assassination : 2.4.1990

Survived by wife (43), son(23), daughters (27, 25)

He was a constable in the State Police Department. He was posted at Shopian which has been the principal centre

of Muslim insurgency. As per the text-books taught in the Muslim Madrasas, he was a kafir and Zalim rolled into one. Hence he had to be eliminated and the alibi given out for his killing was the usual one that he was an informer. The Muslim killers lying in wait for him gunned him down when Dilip Singh was treading towards the market for fetching milk. His gruesome slaughter sparked off massive demonstrations in Tral by the Sikhs who flashed their kirpans and let loose their hair as a mark of protest.

Ved Lal Bhat

Name : Ved Lal Bhat

Father's Name : Nand Lal Bhat

Date of Birth : 10.5.1933

Date of Assassination : 26.7.1990

Residence: Sopore, Baramulla

Survived by wife(51), sons(30,25,23), daughter (21)

He was principal of the Higher Secondary school, Sopore. He had not migrated even though Sopore township was the snake-pit of Muslim armed insurgency. For a brief period he had gone to Jammu where as a responsible officer he was deputed to disburse the salaries to the refugee employees. This act of Ved Lal established his credentials of an informer. Unaware of the campaign of calumny against him, he returned to Sopore to invite death and destruction. The school which he presided over was the den of Muslim killers. It was in his school only that he was put to a volley of bullets and the killers are said to be the teachers working in cahoots with all levels of armed Muslim insurgents.

Rattan Lal Raina

Name : Rattan Lal Raina

Father's Name : Lassa Kak Raina

Date of Birth : 6.5.1947

Date of Assassination : 18.8.90

Residence: Karapora Khushki, Rainawari Srinagar

Survived by wife(40), daughter (15), father(68), mother(65)

He was the son of a poor school teacher, who lived in absolute indigence but continued with the inherited tradition of imparting education to his progeny. He was employed in Jammu and Kashmir Bank. He was led to the trap of death laid for him by a Muslim friend, who is a cowherd boy. While talking to him the Muslim boy led him to a lane of the locality where the Muslim killers were waiting for him. When he came very close to them, he was fired upon killing him instantaneously. With a view to instilling fear in the Kashmiri Pandits his body was thrown on a crossing surrounded by the Pandit houses.

Autar Krishen Pandita

Name : Autar Krishen Pandita

Father's Name : Maheshwar Nath Pandita

Date of Birth : 4.3.1967

Date of Assassination : 12.8.1990

Residence: Rohama, Sopore Baramulla

Survived by father(63), mother(57), brother(28,18) sister(25)

He was said to be employed at Police Station Khanabal, Anantnag. He was kidnapped while on duty. He was taken to chankhan, Sopore and put to untold torture. It is re-

ported that people heard his screams when he was beaten with iron rods. He was trampled upon and burning cigarette ends were applied to his body. Despite his cries and screams nobody came to retrieve him from the clutches of the Muslim butchers. He was bitten and flesh peeled off his body. Bullets were pumped into him. After he was dead he was hurled into the Jehlum. A decomposed body was recovered from the river which could not be identified. The Police Station at Khanabal is said to have declared him missing and was deliberately put on leave. His disappearance and subsequent killing have not been looked into by any of the human rights groups.

Brij Nath Koul

Name : Brij Nath Koul

Father's Name : Not known

Date of birth : Not known

Date of Assassination : Not known

Residence: Shopian Pulwama

Survived by Not known

He was a driver in the Agriculture University, Shalimar Srinagar and as a serious threat to Islam was kidnapped from his residential quarter along with his wife. Koul in barbaric fashion was tied by his legs with the Jeep in which the Muslim terrorists were travelling. He was dragged for a distance of 10 kilometres, finally untied at Chak-i-Hajan on Shopian-Kulagam highway in an unconscious state and put to bullets. The bloody spectacle was witnessed by hundreds of God-fearing Muslims who in barbaric fashion yelled in utter glee that his head was shattered, his leg was broken, his eye was smashed and his entrails were out.

His wife Sumitra Devi, poor and helpless, was gangraped and tortured by the Muslim tormentors. Finally she was strangulated and slaughtered and thrown to the vultures.

A Muslim officer of the department of Agriculture is said to be responsible for their killing. The same officer is said to be responsible for the killing of another Kashmiri Pandit from Wanpoh, District Anantnag.

Mrs Babli Shrimati Roopawati

Name: Babli/Shrimati Roopawati Bhan

Date of Birth: 25.4.1966/4.7.1947

Date of Assassination: 28.6.90/28.6.90

Residence: Pulwama, Darsu

Survived by husband(25), son(2-1/2), daughter(4)

Survived by husband(43), sons(3 in number), daughter(25)

As Muslim terrorists had established a reign of terror, the Kashmiri Pandits were running off to safer zones to save their skin and faith. Babli and her mother-in-law were loading a bus with their house-hold goods and the terrorists appeared on the scene and kidnapped both of them. They were gangraped and subjected to untold torture. Both of them were put to bullets with impunity.

Asha Koul

Name: Asha Koul

Father's Name: Not known

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination: Not known

Residence: Achabal

Survived by Not known

She was pretty and charming, nice and well behaved. The Muslim hounds abducted her from Achabal in Anantnag. She was taken to an abandoned Kashmiri Pandit house in Srinagar where she was pitilessly tortured and gangraped for days on end. Ultimately she was hurled into a river where from her decomposed body was recovered on 8.8.42.

Babli Raina

Name: Babli Raina

Father's Name: Not known

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination: Not known

Residence: Sopore, Baramulla

She was a teacher and had been teaching Muslim girls with zest and dedication. The Muslim hounds given to lechery but accepted as Mujjahids forcibly entered her house in Sopore and barbarically gangraped her in presence of her family on 13.8.1990. Finally she was put to bullets.⁴³

Mrs. Sohan Lal Braroo

Name: Mrs Sohan Lal Braroo

Husband's Name: Sohan Lal Braroo

Date of Birth: 8.10.1940

Date of Assassination: 30.4.1992

Residence: Brayikujan, Srinagar

Survived by brother(50), son (28)

Sohan Lal Braroo lived in indigence and had not migrated to the desert lands of Jammu. As a man present on the scene it was expected that the Muslim barbarians would not kill him or his family. But being infidels they had to suffer the Muslim wrath. The barbarians entered his house and gangraped his wife and daughter. After the gangrape was over his wife was put to pistol shots. His daughter just in teens died during the rape. The grisly incident provoked demonstrations which were suppressed by the terrorists by resorting to retaliatory measures. Sohan Lal was not spared either. He was massacred with bloody vengeance.

Bal Krishen Tutoo

Name: Bal Krishen Tutoo

Father's Name: Vish Nath Tutoo

Date of Birth: 3.3.1930

Date of Assassination: 6.6.1990

Residence: Sheshyar, Habbakadal Srinagar

Survived by wife(50), son(27,22,19), daughter(18)

He was on the threshold of sixties but looked young and smart. The Muslim terrorists lying in wait for their kill fired upon him injuring him fatally in his chest. In a critical condition he was shifted to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar where doctors in all callousness left him uncared for as he was a Kafir. It marked an eclipse of medical ethics in face of Muslim ethics.

There were scores of Hindus who kissed death for want of medical care and aid as the Hospital was infested with psychopaths masquerading as doctors.

Keshav Nath Pandit

Name: Keshav Nath Pandit

Father's Name: S.L.Pandit

Date of Birth: 20.1.1919

Date of Assassination: 9.12.1988

Residence: Noorpoora, Tral, Pulwama

Survived by wife(65)

He was the first martyr who fell to the rising tide of Muslim bigotry. He was brutally killed by a Muslim constable, Mohammad Yousuf No.616 who had the Jamaat-i-Islami orientation and was allowed to sneak into the police forces. Mohammad Yusuf was the policeman on duty at the Hindu shrine in Vicharnag and in the wee hours of morning pounced on the old Mahant, dragged him out of his room, tore off his sacred thread in Islamic fashion and forced him to read Kalima and get converted to Islam. The Mahant stood his ground and declined the offer of conversion to Islam. The Chowkidar of the shrine begged of the Muslim bigot and killer to spare Keshav Nath. But the policeman went on insisting on him to read Kalima. He kicked and beat the Mahant and ultimately struck him with the butt of his gun killing him on the spot. And such an act of bigotry on part of a policeman happened when Farooq Abdullah was the Chief Minister.

It is said that the killer was paid a hefty sum of money for carrying out the murder.

Ramesh Kumar Bhat

Name: Ramesh Kumar Bhat

Father's Name:

Date of Birth:

Date of Assassination: Living

Residence: Shopian, Pulwama

He is said to have been kidnapped from S.M.H.S Hospital, Srinagar where food for the patients was served to the Muslim terrorists and beds for the ill and ailing were used by the terrorists. To satiate their diseased mental proclivities the Muslim hounds subjected him to monstrous atrocities. They broke his legs, chopped off his tongue and inflicted burns on him through burning cigarette butt-ends. He was hurled into the river in a state of unconsciousness, but was immediately rescued by CRPF Jawans who got him treated and revived. He is a pulsating proof of Muslim terrorism and barbarity.

Avtar Krishen

Name: Avtar Krishen

Father's Name: Pt. Sham Lal

Date of Birth: July, 1962

Date of Assassination: March, 1990

Residence: Pulwama

He was kidnapped from his residence and was kept in captivity for a number of days. His skin was peeled off by pliers and his body bore burn marks. His abdomen was ripped open and thrown off on a road-side thus signalling a victory for Islam.

R.K. Razdan

Name: R.K. Razdan

Father's Name:

Date of Birth:

Date of Assassination: Living

Residence: Chattabal, Srinagar

He was kidnapped and fleeced with a plastic insulated telephone wire. He fell unconscious and the Muslim hounds taking him as dead hurled him into the Jehlum. Soon gaining consciousness Razdan crept towards the road and was rescued by BSF Jawans. His body bore cigarette burns and deep - cut wounds inflicted by sharp edged weapons.

Durga Nath Rafiz

Name : Durga Nath Rafiz

Father's Name: Jia Lal Rafiz

Date of Birth: 11.10.1942

Date of Assassination : 3.6.1992

Residence : Jawahir Nagar, Srinagar

Survived by wife (45), son (23), daughters (20, 17)

He was a Sub-Inspector in Border Security Force and was posted at Pantachowk. His house at Jawahar Nagar had three shops, two of them were already let out and the third one was to let. A Muslim contacted him for tenancy of the shop that was locked up. Durga Nath out of good faith unlocked the shop for the person who desired to have a look of it. Terms and conditions were set and settled and the would - be tenant as per settlement was required to pay

Rs. 10,000 in advance. He fixed the day on which he would come to pay the advance money and lock the shop. As per promise the Muslim turned up and called on Durga Nath who came out to see him. He requested him to accompany him to his house where he would pay him the advance money in stealth as the militants had purveying eyes and would demand their own pound of flesh. Durga Nath failed to smell the rat though the brutal killing of Pandits had already touched a new water-mark. He accompanied the would-be tenant and never returned alive. His dead body was found at Badshah Nagar near Natipora. His tongue was chopped off for having asked for money to be paid in advance. His whole skull was bored from a point in the neck. The copper coin that was placed in his mouth as a matter of ritual dropped from the same hole that was burrowed in his neck. What is astounding that the Muslim who had led him into to the death trap is reported to have occupied the same shop.

Bhushan Lal Koul

Name : Bhushan Lal Koul

Father's Name : Sham Lal Koul

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination : 2.7.1990

Residence : Ashamam, Habbakadal, Srinagar.

Survived by Not known

He was gentle, noble and God-fearing. He was a devotee of the Chakreshawari shrine and would barely miss a chance to pay his obeisance to the gods and goddesses thronging the Hariparbat Hillock. On the fateful day of July 2 he left his home at about 10 in the morning for his daily routine. He did not return home till late hours in the

night. He failed to turn up even on the next day. His family smelt a rat and began wailing and moaning. Ultimately the disappearance of Bhushan Lal was reported to the concerned Police Station at Kral Khud. The Station House officer was brutal in his behaviour and lauded the Muslim terrorists for the role they were playing for ushering in a new era for Kashmir and unequivocally said that in the process many people were bound to die. At the gate of the Police Station a constable asked the relatives of Bhushan Lal to leave for Jammu as there was every likelihood that he might have been killed by the Mujjahids. His dead body was finally found lying on a road. He was straightaway butchered by the Muslim butchers. He carried three bullet wounds. He was cremated under security cover and his dependants were shifted to Jammu. His brother is reported to have written to the Home Ministry about the cold-blooded murder of Bushan Lal, but not a word of consolation was heard from that quarter. Such has been the de-humanised face of Government of India.

M.L. Bhan

Name: M.L.Bhan

Father's Name: Not known

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination: 15.1.1990

Residence: Ompara, Badgam

Survived by Not known

He boarded the bus bound for Srinagar. He was accompanied by his 12 year old son. His two killers also boarded the same bus. When the bus started plying, they stood up from their seats and found a room close by the side of

Bhan and his son. In the flash of a moment one killer shot him at his temples. He died in no time. His son sitting by the side of his father was shell-shocked and clung to his father whom he felt still warm. He cried and screamed for help and sympathy. But none of the passengers who were all Muslims cared to listen to him. Nor did they try to console the little boy. Instead they abused him and jeered at him. The terrorists in full command of the situation ordered the driver to stop the bus. As he stopped the bus, they threw away the dead body on the road-side and pushed the little boy out of the bus. At last a vehicle of the security forces sailed by. The Jawans lifted his body and also picked up his son. The Muslims who had thronged on the road-side exhibited their absolute hostility towards the miserable little boy and the dead body of his father.

Ashok Suri

Name: Ashok Suri

Father's Name: Not known

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination: Not known

Residence: Kralpora, Badgam

Survived by Not known

He was a driver who used to carry newspapers to the Western News Stand in Lal Chowk, Srinagar. On the fateful day he was kidnapped by the terrorists when he was on way to Srinagar. He was severely tortured. His body bore multiple burn marks. When half-dead he was told that they had to kill his brother and he was caught by mistake. So he was let off. Somehow he reached his home and narrated the woeful saga to his brother and begged of him to flee as his life was in imminent danger. But his brother did not

oblige him. It was in the mid-night that the Muslim terrorists again gate-crashed into his house, attacked him with a sharp-edged weapon, chopped off his neck and left him to meet an agonising death.

B.L.Raina

Name: B.L.Raina

Father's Name: Damodar Swaroop Raina

Date of Birth: 4.7.1955

Date of Assassination: 26.6.1990

Residence: Frisal (Anantnag)

Survived by wife(32), sons(4), daughter(3)

He had buzzed off his home in the wake of Muslim terrorism. But he returned to his native hamlet when his old father Damodar Saroop Raina was kidnapped from his home and whose fate is still not known. He along with his family and relatives who all had come back from Jammu were provided security cover by the security forces. Ultimately he was informed by the police that it was futile for him and others to wait for the release of his father as they had failed to get a clue leading to his recovery dead or alive. Accompanied by a posse of security people he alongwith his relatives was despatched to Jammu. Raina de-boarded the vehicle at Qazigund and despite hostility from local people he returned to his native hamlet. His family was there and he had not despatched them to Jammu. Just a kilometre away from his home, the vehicle was ambushed by the Muslim terrorists and Raina was one of the three victims. Within a time-period of 25 days father and the son were eliminated by the terrorists who proclaimed it as a great victory for Islam.

A.K.Raina

Name: A.K.Raina (M. Tech, Chemical Engineering)

Father's Name: Jia Lal Raina

Date of Birth: 4.6.1946

Date of Assassination: 20.3.1990

Residence: Kandi Khas, Handwara

Survived by wife(42), sons(16,14) daughter(x)

He was gentle, genial and highly sophisticated. He had risen to the position of Deputy Director Food and Supplies through his personal achievements and intrinsic merit. On the fateful day he came to his office as usual and was attending to his files and official matters. Suddenly the Muslim killers entered his office and fired a volley of bullets on him. He fell from the chair and was drenched in his own pool of blood. His body was there in his office for hours together. Police did not arrive on the scene of murder. All Muslims in his office were fully aware of the killers having decided to take his toll. Nobody informed Raina of the Muslim plans to slaughter him for the supremacy of Islam and extirpation of infidelity.

Bharat Bushan Koul

Name: Bharat Bushan Koul

Father's Name:

Date of Birth:

Date of Assassination: 22.5.1990

Residence: Ompora, Badgam

Survived by

He continued to live in his village though the Muslim terrorists as per their delineated plans had brutally killed a number of Pandits in the village. The terrorists kidnapped

him, stuffed his mouth with a big lump of cloth and then hung him from a tree with a slip pinned on him. It announced that a person who dared touch his body would be paid one lakh rupees as reward. The family had to leave for Jammu and had stuffed a vehicle with some essentials. But before their departure terrorists battered into the house and carried away Bharat Bhushan at gun-point and his body hung from a tree was spotted next day. It is alleged that Dr. Zahoor, Director of the Medical Institute, Soura had refused him leave.

Suresh Kumar Kisoo

Name: Suresh Kumar Kisoo

Father's Name: Not known

Date of Birth: Not known

Date of Assassination: 17.5.1990

Residence: Raghu Nath Mandir, Srinagar

Survived by Not known

He had walked out of his house on some business. The Muslim terrorists lying in wait squirted bullets on him when he was returning home. He fell down screaming in pain and agony. The terrorists opened their trousers, flaunted their genitals and urinated on his dead body. Another Muslim who witnessed the macabre scene patted the gun-wielding brutes for the treatment they had meted out to a Kafir.

T.K. Razdan

Name: T.K.Razdan

Father's Name: S.L.Razdan

Date of Birth: 9.9.1951

Date of Assassination: 12.2.1990

Residence: Badiyar Bhalla, Srinagar

Survived by wife(35), daughters(5, 4 months old)

He was an inspector in Central Bureau of Investigation and was posted in the Punjab. He came to Srinagar for a holiday. On that fateful day an old colleague of his came to see him at his place. Both of them boarded a mini-bus for Lal Chowk. When the driver stopped the bus at Gawkadal to de-board some passengers, Razdan's old Muslim friend pushed out a pistol and shot him in his chest. He dragged him out of the mini-bus and flung the Muslim passengers to trounce him under their feet. He was dragged on the road for quite a bit of distance. His dead body was thrown by the side of a mosque and continued lying there for hours on end till he was reluctantly picked up by police. He was said to be assassinated by Manzoor Ahmed Shalla, a JKLF Muslim hound. His body was cremated by the CRPF alongwith his identity card that was nailed to his body by the killer and his accomplices.

Damodar Swaroop Raina

Name: Damodar Swaroop Raina

Father's Name: Veshya Joo Raina

Date of Birth: April, 1927

Date of disappearance: 2.6.1990

Residence: Frisal, Anantnag

Survived by son (45)

He was a retired government servant and was living the evening of his life peacefully. But the Muslim terrorists in their frenzy to cleanse Kashmir of Pandit infidels wrote his

fate otherwise. They gate-crashed into his house when it was pitch dark in the night. His wife tried to avoid their onslaught by telling them that he was not home. But they searched every nook and cranny of the house and discovered him hiding in the attic of the upper-most storey of his house. They brutally dragged him out. The agonising and heart-rending cries of his wife could not impact the heartless killers. She begged of her Muslim neighbours to intervene so that he could be retrieved. They saw what was happening but failed to save the man from their clutches. The old man has remained untraced so far.

Sushil Kumar Kotru

Name: Sushil Kumar Kotru

Father's Name: R.K. Kotru

Date of Birth: 8.3.1973

Date of Assassination: 23.4.1990

Residence: Bagadaji, Rainawari, Srinagar

Survived by father (65), mother (60), brothers (37,34), sisters (30,27)

He was a student of XI class. The muslim hounds said to be his near and distant neighbours caught hold of him in a nearby lane and started beating him to death. He was kicked and trounced, slapped and spat at. His hair was plucked out and his hands and feet were broken. Finally he was put to bullets and the killers danced and sang for the victory of Nizam-e-Mustafa.

B.K. Ganjoo

Name: B.K. Ganjoo

Father's Name: Dina Nath Ganjoo

Date of Birth: Feb., 1990

Date of Assassination:

Residence: Chota Bazaar, Srinagar

Survived by

He was a telecommunications engineer with a bright future. His name was on the hit-list as he was informed of it by a Muslim said to be friendly towards him. On that fateful day at exactly 9 in the morning a killer knocked at the door of his house and was told by his wife that Ganjoo was out of his house and had left for his office. But the killer did not stop knocking at the door. His wife also did not open the door. Even on the persuasion of his wife he did not ring up the police station. Meanwhile the killers made an opening to intrude into the house and searched every nook and cranny of the house and failed to get hold of their victim who had hidden himself in a drum meant for rice. The two killers were laced with a Klashnikov and a pistol. They left the house disgusted and when at the gate of the house a Muslim neighbour of Ganju signalled them to go to the top storey of the house. They hastily went up and found him hiding in the rice drum. Both the hounds emptied their breast of bullets on him and killed him on the spot. His wailing widow begged of them to kill all the family as after his death they had little meaning in life. The brutal killers said, "who will cry over his body, if we kill you"?⁴⁴

Dr. (Mrs) Sahni

Name: Dr. (Mrs) Soni

Father's /Husband's Name: Ved Lal Sumbli

Date of Birth: 8.11.1912

Date of Assassination: 18.7.1990

Residence: Karan Nagar Srinagar

Survived by none

She had lived all her life in Srinagar and was a very popular nurse and was taken for a doctor. After the outbreak of Muslim insurgency she had stayed on in Srinagar and had not migrated even for a short period of time. The Muslim terrorists harboured absolute abhorrence for her as it was within the knowledge of all that she carried out abortions on unmarried Muslim girls who had been raped by them.

After the fall of evening Muslim gangsters carrying lethal weapons forcibly entered her house, hurled invective on her, beat her with shoes and rods and tied her to the bed with a rope. Soni was 78-year old. She was not shown any mercy though she pleaded for it. She wept and wailed and none of the terrorists was moved. As an act of absolute cruelty the Muslim hounds sprinkled petrol over the room and set it ablaze. Dr. Soni who had served the Muslims throughout her life screamed to rend the sky. Her screams could be heard by all her neighbours who never turned up to save her from the clutches of the hounds fighting for Jihad. She was burnt to death.

Anil Bhan

Name: Anil Bhan

Father's Name: Chaman Lal Saraf, adopted by his grandfather late N.K.Bhan

Date of Birth: 8.6.1963

Date of Assassination: 16.2.1990

Survived by father(48), mother(45), sister(25)

He was a bright youth with an enviable academic record. Having earned a masters degree in the subject of Agriculture he sat for a competitive examination and through his

sheer abilities and achievements won an appointment as Agricultural Technical Officer in the United Commercial Bank. Intelligent and committed to his profession he rose to be the Assistant Branch Manager of the said -Bank. The Muslim terrorists with the chalked-out plans of eliminating all bright Kashmiri Pandit youngmen assassinated him when he was on his way to his office at Badshah Chowk, Srinagar. They squirted bullets on him when he took a turn near Reshi Mohalla. He fell down with blood oozing out from the numerous wounds caused by bullets. His killing generated a lot of fear and panic among Kashmiri pandits. The locality of Kannikadal where Anil lived was reduced to a desert land as all the Pandits inhabiting the area boarded the next available bus carrying them to safer zones for refuge from the Muslim hounds. Nobody was convinced when the Muslim killers said that it was a case of mistaken identity. His brutal slaughter spread like wild fire throughout the valley through the screeching lines in the local dailies strengthening the impression that Muslim killers operating from the mosques had to massacre all youngmen belonging to the Pandit community thus leading to their exodus from the killing field of Kashmir.

Do the Indian ostriches know it? Does Kuldip Nayar capping them all know it?

Bansi Lal Misri

Name: Bansi Lal Misri

Father's Name: Jia Lal Misri

Date of Birth: 8.9.1960

Date of Assassination: 27.3.1990

Residence: Hyderpora, Badgam

Survived by wife(27), son(1 year old)

He was a handsome youngman with many miles to go. Unlike Pandit youngmen he had taken up business as his career and was doing extremely well. He had shifted to Jammu in the wake of terrorist deluge enveloping the valley. But he chose to return to his home-land in connection with his business which he had deftly expanded. He stayed with his brother at Hyderpora where he had constructed a house. The Muslim killers three in number knocked at the door of the house. His brother jumped off the wall and ran off to save his skin. Bansi informed them that he was not home. The killers immediately changed their mind and decided to kill him. One killer would chase him, the other would guard the inner door of the house and the third killer would position himself at the outer gate fringing the lane. The first killer chased him and Bansi ran up the stairs of the house and jumped off the window into the compound. He could not stand up as he broke his legs. The second killer arrived on the scene and put him to bullets. The third killer too joined them and emptied his whole breast on him killing him instantly. Many bullets had struck his head and his brains thus hammered out were seen hanging on one side. The local police as part of the fundamentalist intrigue did not arrive on the spot. The CRPF personnel evacuated the family of his brother to Jammu under security cover. He might have been cremated or given a burial as none of his family attended his last rites.

Pushker Nath Koul

Name: Pushker Nath Koul

Father's Name: Dina Nath Koul

Date of Birth: 10.6.1941

Date of Assassination: 22.4.1990

Residence: Bijbehara, Anantnag

Survived by wife(48), Sons(30,25), daughter(16)

He was unemployed and lived on an income accruing from a small orchard that he owned. He was frank, fair and forthright in his manner. He zestfully cultivated and maintained good relations with the Muslim residents of his village. With the spread of terrorism he became suspect in the eyes of Muslims whom he advised to distance themselves from the outfits that had started operating in the village. Because of his cultivated contacts with them Pandits thought him safe and secure from the Muslim onslaught. But what they had thought about him got disproved when at exact 8 in the evening a Muslim killer knocked at his door. His wife warded him off by telling that he was out of home. Meanwhile he started having his meal. The same killer broke open all the doors and entered his room to tell him that he was wanted by the Station House Officer. Pushker Nath had taken only two morsels, gave up eating anymore and accompanied the heartless killer. He was whisked away and his daughter small in years informed the Kashmiri Pandit neighbours about the incident. They got panicked, did not sleep for the whole night and made some attempts to inform the Police but were stopped in their tracks by a N.C. activist who might have been aware of his ultimate fate. The younger son of Pushker Nath, fearless and agile, could have organised some efforts for his retrieval, but was away from home and was not immediately informed. Pushker Nath was meted out the same treatment that is prescribed for the kafirs through practices and precedents. He was severely tortured as his body bore burn marks. He was beaten with iron rods, skinned off and left to die. His body was lying under a tree at Thajvour and was recovered by Police fully aware of the incident but "no action" was the pass-word. He was allegedly killed by the same killer, Mana Darzi alia Manzoor-Ul-Islam who had killed Prem Nath Bhat and many others.

Ramesh Kumar Bhat

Name: Ramesh Kumar Bhat

Father's Name:

Date of Birth:

Date of Assassination:living

Residence: Damhal-Hanjipora(Kulgam)

Survived by: Wife (35), Son (12), Daughter (8).

Ramesh Bhat is a fireman. He was on duty in the fire-station Damhal-Hanjipora. It was exactly in the night of 31st May, 1990 that the terrorists as per their pre-drawn blue-print entered his room where he was playing cards with his colleagues, two Muslims and a Sikh. Being a Kashmiri Pandit he was picked up and whisked away in the taxi of Gula Dar of the same village. There were nearly twenty firemen of different ranks in the building of fire-brigade but none came to intercede with a view to saving him from the clutches of the killers.

Having reached Garo village the killers accused him of being a spy and asked him to hand over the wireless set through which he was transmitting messages to his Indian masters. As he failed to produce a wireless set the Muslim tormentors beat him with the pistol butts and fractured his head. He was carried to Nehama where he was stabbed in his back and two sides. A dagger was pierced into his spleen and he fell like a felled tree. Riding on his body he was trampled upon, crushed and left as dead. After two hours the Muslim hounds returned to the same spot and beat him black and blue and installed a tag on his body claiming responsibility for his murder.

Meanwhile a fire-van sailed by and fire-men taking him as dead lifted him and admitted him in the Kulagam hospital where he was given first aid. Therefrom he was shifted to Bijbehara hospital by BSF and CRPF personnel.

As he was in deep pain the doctors advised the security men to get him admitted in SMHS Hospital where he was operated upon and his spleen was removed.

The armed Muslim terrorists came to the hospital to kill him but they failed in their sinister design because of security men guarding his body. After getting discharged Ramesh stayed at Avantipora Group Centre for two months. His family was shifted to Jammu soon after Ramesh was stabbed. Presently he is living in a rented slum in Jammu. He has a wrap round his waist. He walks with great difficulty and is weak and emaciated.

Chamam Lal Koul

Name: Chaman Lal Koul

Father's Name: Shyam Lal Koul

Date of Birth: 10.7.1944

Date of Assassination: June 1990

Residence: Patlipora, Chattabal, Srinagar

Survived by wife(44), sons(11,9) daughter(13)

Chaman Lal Koul was a bright person with a degree in Commerce. He served as an Accounts Officer in the Department of Industries and was known for his competence. In the wake of Muslim insurgency his entire family including his old father had fled to Jammu. But Chaman Lal stayed back and continued attending his duties. On the fateful day he cooked his food, laid it on the table, switched on the idiot-box and was about to settle himself for lunch when a Muslim fairly known to him called him out for a word. Gripped by fear and panic Chaman Lal called his neighbour, Som Nath, a young man of 32 years who had stayed back to serve his invalid mother. Chaman Lal and Som Nath together accompanied the caller who was known even to the latter.

Both of them were whisked away and nothing was known about them for full four days. Som Nath's ailing and invalid mother wailed and screamed in agony but that would not melt the hearts of the Muslim killers. Chaman Lal and Som Nath were hacked into pieces and were stuffed into two gunny bags which were found lying on the Alijan Road. The police took the hacked bodies to the cremation ground for last rites. The ashes of Som Nath were handed over to his old invalid mother who was shifted to Jammu under security cover. The ashes of Chaman Lal were handed over to his old father at Jammu.

Daya Ram Koul

Name: Daya Ram Koul

Father's Name: Sona Koul

Date of Birth: 2.4.1916

Date of Assassination: 13.6.1990

Residence: Chitragam, Shopian

Survived by: Wife (75), Son (40,30), daughter (5)

Daya Ram Koul had not fled his native hamlet as he alongwith his family was assured of safety by his neighbours and family friends. It was an influential family which owned a large business establishment in Chitragam. Daya Ram in the evening of his life was reluctant to abandon his birth-place and was keen to breathe his last in his own native village.

When Daya Ram was younger in years he had taken an oath at the Shrine of Nand Rishi alongwith his twelve Muslim friends that they would live and die together and partake of joys and sorrows of life in the company of one another. He alone remembered the pledge and rest of his twelve Muslim friends had clean forgotten it and it cost his life.

The family lived comfortably and without fear and trepidation till 12th June, 1990. On the ugly day of 13th June 1990 a band of Muslim terrorists laced with sophisticated weapons entered his house and asked Daya Ram's eldest son to accompany them for a word. The mother begged of them for mercy and cleverly pushed them out of the house and bolted the door from inside. Her son managed to flee the scene. Meanwhile she sent for the Muslim neighbour who had assured them of protection. He failed to turn up pretending illness. Sensing trouble she alongwith her family fled her house and cried for help but nobody came to their rescue. Terrorists fled the scene and did not strike that time.

Daya Ram as a matter of life-long habit used to go to the stream flowing on the outskirts of the village for ablutions and prayers. In the wee hours of the morning he was returning home after ablutions and prayers when suddenly a taxi stopped near him. He was accompanied by a boy who could sense that the taxi was loaded with terrorists. He was forcibly huddled into the taxi and whisked away. His family lodged a report with the CRPF centre, but that proved a mere routine. After two hours his dead body was found in Frisal village near Dumbi Dul. He was cremated by his family in his ancestral crematorium as per his past wish. What was shocking that the taxi used by the terrorists belonged to one of his twelve friends who had vowed in their youth to live together through thick and thin at Nand Rishi's shrine.

The CRPF shifted the whole family to Udhampur and are in exile.

9 LOOT, GRAB AND ARSON OF KASHMIRI PANDIT PROPERTIES

In their crusade launched with utmost fire and fury to establish a radical theocratic system, cleansing the land of Pandit infidels, the Muslim terrorists uncritically accepted as Mujjahids by the Muslim population went whole-hog to buttress up and fine-tune the record of gory traditions of their ancestors who roasted people alive and ripped open the foetuses of pregnant women and resorted to loot, plunder and massacre for whole-sale conversion thereby adding horrendous chapters to the despicable book of barbarity. Unflinching in their obedience to the tradition of tyrants, the new brand of Muslim terrorists concealing their identities under resounding and high-flown Islamic names could not be found wanting in perpetuating the memory of vandals and consummating the holy task assigned to them by cesspits of Madrasas as the creation of Islamic fanatics. To them goes the credit of performing the sacred rites of loot and pillage, rape and arson.

Once the Kashmiri Pandits have been forced to flee their homes and hearths to uncharted destinations, Nemesis started her dreadful operations. Having looted and ransacked their living abodes, the terrorists and their large mass of Muslim collaborators displayed their fiendishness by torching off the Pandit houses built with the sweat and blood of their life-time earnings. As tribals in 1947 had been lured to the loot and rape of bazars in Srinagar, the Muslims lending unmitigated support to the surge of armed insurgency were promised loot, plunder, rape and unbridled appropriation of Pandit properties.

Loot and Plunder

The loot and pillage of Pandit houses was carried out under a well calibrated plan and strategy. As a first step they were marked red to stand them out from the mixed populations for purposes of loot, rapacious appropriation and arson. For looting operations areas were assigned to the gangs of looters working in cohesion with mosque committees and experts churned out from Madrasas. A lightning operation for stealing rubber shoes from Pandit houses was conducted by the same elements with mosques as pivotal centres and to the knowledge of all mosques had mushroomed at a quick pace in strategic areas with the massive aid of petro-dollars pouring in from channels abroad through local conduits. After the launch of insurgency the waves of looters replicating their history in time fanned out in various directions to get lost into the Pandit habitations and returned gaga with immense booty to the precincts of mosques for distribution leaving a chunk for mosque committees led by hard-core Mullahs fanged with bigotry and separatism. The frenzied looters reflecting the apachi culture that has long been the essential ethos of Kashmir are said not to be the traditional thieves and anti-socials, but well-off and prosperous guys suffused with ferocious vengeance and anti-Pandit venom. Overpowered by predatory and confiscatory persuasions, acquired and instinctive, assiduously nurtured and cultivated in the Quranic schools, the Muslim looters broke open the doors and windows or bored burrow-like openings like predatory animals for access into the houses for loot and plunder. It will be a miracle if any Kashmiri Pandit house has escaped the looting sprees. The entire Pandit habitations scattered over the fertile valley have suffered not one bout of loot and plunder, but several such spells of depredations and ravages.

To the shame of the shameless, the Islamic looters set up bazars where the looted property was openly put to sale. The markets picked up for the purpose were not

confined to the towns in the valley, but the looted goods were pushed into the national market from Jammu to Delhi to Bombay to Calcutta. Brass utensils spirited away from the kitchens of Pandit houses were pulverised into bits, stuffed into bags and sent across the border as proof of their true Islamic orientation which had faked and lost its sheen by an overlaying of Brahmanic culture. Gas cylinders stolen in spells of loot from the ravaged houses were kept without any twinge of conscience and when their numbers swelled beyond any count, they were openly sold as if slaves were being sold to the Muslim buyers in the slave-market of Turkistan. The shawls of various varieties maintained as the prized possessions looted from the abodes of expelled natives are said to be sold to the sophisticates throughout the national market especially the Bengali market where patronage is lavishly showered on pedlars of loot. Radio-sets, Television sets, wall clocks, sewing machines, newly sewn suits and dresses, saris of prominent delicacy *et al* acquired through organised loot and legitimised as booty are kept to swell the stocks of those either in business or venture to float new businesses. The merciless looters engaged in "wiping out" operations against the religious enemies have not spared their mattings and beddings thereby beefing up the quantum of their material properties considered a value in desert cultures. With the looted properties from Pandit houses businesses have been diversified or rendered a specialised touch. There are looters who are said to peddle in all sorts of electronic goods and gadgets acquired through loot. There are others who have set up antique shops dealing in rare *objects d'art and artefacts* looted from Kashmiri Pandit sophisticates and plucked out from temples.

With incalculable wealth of petro-dollars pouring in, Pakistan pumping millions to sustain and proliferate terrorism and India in response not lagging behind to quench the blazing fires of insurgency by allowing loot of public moneys or through huge packages and booty in kitties, the sole

beneficiary, they say, is the Kashmiri Muslim who has visibly scaled new levels of prosperity and affluence incomparable to what he enjoyed prior to 1988 bench-mark. As a sure manifestation and indicator of newly acquired opulence and prosperity, there is an unprecedented construction boom in the valley. New structures are pompously built and old ones are dismantled and re-built more often than not with doors and windows, inner ceilings and G.I.E sheets and other building materials uprooted, plucked out and stripped from the houses of infidels. Those of their eviscerated houses which are yet standing and waiting for the date fixed for their blaze have a saga to relate and a statement to make. They carry grisly scars and gaping wounds as the marauders in their cycles of plunder and sack have looted away the house-hold effects that invested them with the throb and feel of pulsating abodes. Their doors and windows have been pitilessly removed. They are shorn of stones, bricks and other materials vitally placed to render monolithic wholeness to the edifices. Inside houses the same loot and plunder has been affected. Almirahs, ward-robres, electric fittings, water connections, switches, lamp shades, wash-basins and more than most toys of children and their wooden cradles have been looted away with savagery. There are houses galore with no roofs to protect them from rains and snows as the ruthless looters in blitzkrieg operations have sadistically dismantled and removed them for installation in their own constructions. There are open spaces which once were sites of throbbing human settlements and piles of blackened ruins covering them now tell a cruel tale of pillage and plunder.

At Naqashpora, Sathu Barbarshah, Srinagar there were Koulis living, a cultured and prosperous family owning four houses which have been razed to the ground said to be the handiwork of near and distant neighbours. In the brutal operation sixteen houses belonging to Pandits were levelled storey by storey, wall by wall and brick by brick and the materials are said to have disappeared into the houses

of apachies. As reported to a humanistic organisation working for human rights violations three houses belonging to Maharaja Krishen Bhat, Bhasker Nath Bhat and Kanth Ram of village Malmoh, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla were stripped off the G.I.E. sheets serving as roofs of the houses on 15th Dec., 1996 by Muslim looters. The said-village as a Kashmiri Pandit settlement had already suffered orgies of loot and plunder at the hands of tribal looters enjoying autonomy of destructing the religious foes.

Writes Bali, "Those of the houses that have been untorched have the structure of dilapidated walls only with gaping holes for doors and windows are shorn of all fittings, including electric and water taps. As per house-hold and personal effects, these are conspicuously absent. Audio and video tapes alongwith TVs, Video and audio tape recorders, music systems, stereos, kitchen ranges and kitchen gadgets, all have been pilfered. Recording details of this rampage and loot will be ludicrous, bizarre and emotionally painful."⁴⁵

Writes Dr. R.L. Shant, "They have been reduced to a people condemned to suffer bearing tales of arson and plunder of their belongings left back by them in cities and villages from the very neighbours who leave no stone unturned in propagating through terrorist - friendly media in India that they are the custodians of minorities in Kashmir."⁴⁶

Dr. Pandita's House Converted into a Public Latrine

It is dismaying to learn that the ancestral house of Dr. K.N. Pandita situated at Khowja Bagh, Barmulla though standing and left untorched, has been converted into a public latrine at the behest of Muslim bigots. The extreme act of venefulness against Dr. Pandita is being attributed to his exemplary role in exposing the inner motivations of the Muslim brand of terrorism in Kashmir. Dr. Pandita is a Persian scholar with doctorate from

Tehran University and authority on Kashmir affairs. He has had the rare distinction of attending a number of international conferences on Human Rights where he as a deft expert presented the case of Hindus of Kashmir who have been ethnically cleansed from their autochthem abodes and are in exile.

Arson

By the spree of propaganda that they have blazed abroad and the statements that they have blurted out it becomes abundantly clear that the Muslim terrorists are wedded to the cause of Islam which is their soul, faith and driving ideology. As Pandit infidels have no station and role-model in the parochial state of theocracy that is envisaged for Kashmir, they have been ethnically cleansed and ethnic cleansing remains an unfinished agenda if non-Muslims are allowed to retain their abodes in Kashmir which though presently abandoned as a result of their expulsion can be reclaimed through pressures, and intervention from humanistic organisations operating at various levels. With this rationale in view the Muslim militarists have been assiduously busy in destroying the roots of Pandits and roots as a matter of fact lie deeply embedded in settlements which generate an ethos and a culture pattern. It is to the achievement of sinister end of complete ethnic cleansing and also stalling their return to their land of genesis that all shades of frenzied bigots and dyed-in-the-wool fanatics have embarked upon the policy-path of burning Pandit settlements and the process has been continuously on since 1990. What is being done now is only the replication of their past history. Sayyids way back in the mists of time created waves by decreeing the total destruction of settlements when Kashmiri Pandits at the end of the tether of their patience revolted against severe religious persecution and encroachments on their possessions and assets.

As per a survey conducted by a non-government organisation nearly thirty thousand Kashmiri Pandit houses all

over the Valley have been torched off thereby rendering one lakh and fifty thousand Pandits homeless and *deracine* if an average family comprises five members. The Report submitted to the National Human Rights Commission by the Panun Kashmir Movement puts the number of burnt houses of Hindus at 16,000 till 1995. The Government of J&K State have been silent over it as the victims being non-Mulsims are not on its agenda of policy and programme. Under a flawless design of communal diabolerie and chicanery the entire throbbing habitations of ancient origins have been liquidated with no traces left behind. There is no Bana-Mohalla which has been a principal settlement of Pandits with tremendous history in the life and times of Srinagar as an abode of Culture and spirituality. The pre-eminent house of Razdans with Bhaskar Razdan as one of its scions has been burnt to ashes. Bhaskar Razdan is famous for his Sanskrit rendering of Lalla's vakhs in metrical verse. The house of Kokilooos in the same locality stands looted and wiped out. A brilliant ancestor of the family is credited with a work on Sanskrit Grammar which in a manuscript form lies in the Research Library buried and dumped in gunny bags. There is no Rainawari nestling in the creeks and inlets of Dal Lake and more than most the birth-place of Pandit Som Nath Beera who got killed in the hills of Doda while quenching communal fires. There is no Batapora in Shopiyan which was the seminary of a galaxy of nationalists who established educational institutions for Muslims whose descendants have destroyed the locality with a crusading zeal leading to the exodus of Pandit Swaroop Nath, a house-hold name in the district, who died in exile. There is no Gushi in Handwara known as mini-Sharda which has been the cradle of spirituality and folk-lore. The settlement with more than hundred houses has been burnt to cinders by the Muslims gone berserk. Mattan in the District of Anantnag as an ancient site of pilgrimage inhabited by Brahman-priests maintaining historically valuable religious records has been destroyed in

blazing fires. Chowagam in the same district is lost to Pandits as Muslim vandals have ravaged and blazed the entire habitation. Zainapora, the home-town of Pandit Rishi Dev, a politician of long standing and Pandit Arjan Dev Majboor, a poet and literateur, already in exile, was completely wiped out by a frenzied mob of thirty thousand Muslims in the wake of Mast Gul, a Pakistani vandal and brutal lout putting the highly revered shrine of Nanda Rishi to flames.⁴⁷

The two families of Pandits staying back in the village were not spared or shown any mercy. Their houses were first ransacked and then set on fire. Muslims hailed Mast Gul by crying hoarse, "Chrar bani hani hani, Mast Gul kati bani-chrar will be re-built slowly, but Mast Gul is a rare find' and their hurricane fury as usual fell on Pandits and the paper general and his cortege went on watching the orgy of death and destruction befalling Pandits who have not caused portals of governance any anxiety or concern.

Languishing in tattered tents, one-room hutments and rented slums, beleaguered Pandits to their shock and dismay have lost their houses in Malayar, Kralakhud, Ganpatyar, Gundahlmar, Brayikujan, Zaindar Mohalla, Jawahar Nagar, Fateh Kadal, Saffakadal and Karan Nagar. Malayar in the city of Srinagar was a huge sprawling cluster of Pandit houses and it has been burnt down in blazing fires. The houses in Ganpatyar locality standing along roadside have been vengefully torched off. Jawahar Nagar having come up as a posh colony with a modern look and planning presents a scenario of a city sacked by the prototypes of Nadir Shah. Houses of Pandits in Zaindar Mohalla and Karan Nagar have met the same fate at the hands of marauders. Babapora with its interior depths touching the shores of Sheel-teng is a horror scene of war-ravaged waste land. Narparistan sunk in a maze of narrow lanes and byelanes has been licking its wounds as destruction is wrought on the Pandit houses which are now a pile of charred ruins.

The Jihadists as per their delineated plans have not confined their acrid war against the native Pandits to the purlieux of Srinagar, but the hurricane fury of their Jihad in its broad sweep has engulfed their settlements dotting the broad terrain of the valley. Poolie contiguous to the spring of Verinag as a village of Pandit concentration has been obliterated with vengeance. Anantnag with its tremendous Hindu past has lost most of its edifices which were sublime in their heights evoking awe and admiration. Verinag with its pristine waters has been a witness to the gruesome fires which Islamists lit in the Pandit houses for their decimation. The Islamic gun-totters have blazed the houses of Pandits in hamlets surrounding Kokernag which has gone gory with the blood of Pandits. The Muslim arsonists have burnt down Pandit settlements in Kupwara, Baramulla, Safapora, Chingund, Ratnipora, Wahibugh, Tahab, Tenganpurna, Wachi, Zablipora, Krandidgam, Salar, Tral *et al.*

The twenty eight residential houses of Pandits in Chingund falling in Tehsil Duroo were burnt to ashes by Muslim marauders. Even cowsheds, kothars and other structures were not spared. In the FIR filed by the village chowkidar it is clearly stated that a violent Muslim mob attacked and burnt down all the houses, cowsheds and kothars of Hindus of the village in the wake of Babri Masjid episode.⁴⁸

"It is shocking to learn that the wrath against the Kashmiri Pandits has assumed such proportions that those houses, which had already been burnt down and their skeleton structures only stood there, were either again set ablaze or were demolished or razed to the ground,"⁴⁹ writes Arvind Razdan.

The grand old residential house of Pandit Madhav Koul in Anantnag when put to flames was smouldering, smoking and burning for a month's time. It was a massive edifice built in stone, brick and deodar, a real monument

speaking volumes for past glory and hence an eye-sore to the Muslim fanatics. The huge building of Pandit Siri Koul had the same style, grandeur and wood-work and when set ablaze it continued burning for days on end till it was said to have been pulled down by looting away its chiseled logs sustaining the weight of the structure. The house of late Nila Kanth Jad was equally a magnificent structure that had been the target of Muslims since Islamic resurgence in Kashmir and finally Muslim cyclone took a toll of it. The house of late Shridhar Joo Kachru at Babapora in Srinagar when set ablaze continued burning and smoking for ten days and the same is confirmed by Muslim witnesses who have oiled and soiled their hands with the loot of the house.

Records K.N.Pandita, "Indeed these mute and lifeless objects are dangerous because they embody in their lifeless souls the story of a great civilisation that has been allowed to be systematically destroyed by those very elements in building whose civilisation and identity Kashmiri Pandits made the largest contribution."

Grab of Immovable Properties

There is a concerted movement going on in Kashmir to dispossess Kashmiri Pandits by grabbing and appropriating their left-behind immovable properties. All evidences, material and documentary purporting their Kashmiri origins, are under a fierce onslaught of Muslims. No government of the day despite innumerable petitions and submissions ever moved in the direction of protecting their properties from destruction or unlawful occupation. The properties which have not been torched off and are yet standing have been grabbed or are in the process of being seized by the grabbies. Not only have properties been illegally appropriated but shameless attempts have been made to forge false and unsustainable documents which have been audaciously presented in the courts to justify or substantiate the grab and surprisingly some cases have come to light where courts have issued stay orders without material evidences

and even on the basis of fictitious and false documents hastily contrived.

There is a class of grabbies who do not stick to a house which they grab, but go on shifting from house to house as per their sovereign will and their essential targets in the houses are the residues that they lay their sinister hands on. There is another class of grabbies who are more brutal and under religious motivations deem it their right to grab the properties of infidels, who, they believe, are discomfited and have fled the land. Apart from these two classes are herds of intruders who craftily occupy the houses as a first step in the game and subsequently as fait accompli negotiate with the owners through a swarm of touts prowling about Jammu and other metropolises. The Pandit owners when informed of the forcible occupation of their properties are shell-shocked, yet do not take it lying down and submit appeals and plaints in neat language to the concerned authorities in the valley. As the government is and has been in deep paralysis, there is no response to their submissions and plaints which convinces them of the sheer futility of the whole exercise and in despair and desperation are forced to enter into deals at the prices that are offered to them courtesy Muslim touts.

The grab and appropriation of Pandit properties which are left behind in the valley has gained so much of momentum that it has virtually assumed a universal character. There is hardly a Mohalla, locality, village or hamlet where properties have not been occupied and grabbed. In Jawahar Nagar alone there are hundred and eight Kashmiri Pandit houses which are under the illegal occupation of Muslims who taking advantage of collapsed state of law and order or in cahoots with broad sections of administration are emboldened for such intrusion, trespass and grab. In the posh locality of Karan Nagar, a Muslim said to be the Head of a Department is said to have grabbed two houses of a Pandit where he has set up his business venture and is battening at the expense of a hapless fugitive. The case

of forcible occupation was said to have been brought to the notice of the then Chief Secretary, Ashok Kumar, who is reported to have cravenly expressed his inability to intervene in the matter thereby legitimising the loot and the grab. The locality of Channapora presents a glaring scenario of the forcible appropriation of Pandit houses where Muslims as a matter of right have been staying their put without any government agency either obstructing or stalling such violations of law of the land. At Gogji Bagh in the city of Srinagar the three storied house of a non-Muslim has been ravaged by one Muslim family leaving and another entering at will. A Muslim said to be a vegetable seller from Qamarwari is said to have carted away all the furniture in the house in broad day-light and surprisingly the Muslim neighbours in their chance meetings at Jammu always assured the Pandit of the safety of the house and other house-hold goods and effects. Presently a leader of a renegade militant outfit has chosen the house for his stay and is at pains to force a deal on the Pandit.

There are instances galore establishing that shops, business establishments, tracts of cultivable land and more than most economically lucrative orchards belonging to Pandits have been illegally occupied, grabbed and appropriated. Shops of Pandits in prime commercial sites or areas have been under a constant threat of illegal occupation. From Maharaj Bazar to the end of Residency Road, Srinagar most of the business establishments of Pandits have been intruded, trespassed or occupied. It is also stated that after unlawful occupation, may be in certain cases buttressed by Court verdicts mostly *ex-parte*, deals were thrust on the Pandits through Muslim touts. Illegal occupations are generally realised through landlord-illegal occupant-administration nexus. The sprawling fields of cultivable land and huge thriving orchards have been grabbed by Muslims who share the proceeds in partnership with the terrorist outfits and conniving authorities. There are a number of such localities where Muslim hordes vengefully felled the or-

chards from one end to the other thereby inflicting immense losses on the Pandit owners. The walnut trees generally cultivated within the precincts of Pandit houses have been cruelly felled and wood of the felled trees was kept or disposed of in the markets fetching a lucrative price to the marauders.

JKLF Warning

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, a banned terrorist outfit, in a bid to establish its so-called secular credentials, has issued a number of warnings to the illegal occupants of shops, business establishments and landed properties belonging to the Pandits and such warnings are a standing and over-arching testimony to the fact of their illegal usurpation by none other than Muslims.

Farooqi's Statement

In a statement to the press in Jammu, M. Farooqi, leader of the Communist Party of India, suggested that all the left-behind properties in Kashmir valley belonging to Kashmiri Pandit migrants should be declared as 'custodian properties' with a view to rehabilitating them in their native homes and hearths as and when they return to the valley. Appreciative of the government move to take the refugees back to the valley, Farooqi made it amply clear that it could be possible only when their houses are protected (from Muslim marauders) and maintained by the government. In his meeting with the Chief Minister and Finance Minister of the state, Farooqi is said to have broached the subject of the forcible grab of the shop belonging to Janki Dass in Akhara building, Maisuma by a protege of Dr. Karan Singh under the very nose of paramilitary picket which was asked to shift its position through correspondence with B.S.F. authorities by the *dejure* owner who was keen to re-start his business. To the suggestion to declare Kashmiri Pandit properties as "Custodian properties", the Chief Minister and his Finance

Minister to the surprise of Farooqi were said to be in the first instance non-committal and ambivalent.

The Migrant Immovable Property Act, 1997

The Migrant Immovable Property Act, 1997 as passed by the State Legislature establishes that the Kashmiri Pandit properties have been ravaged, destructed, arsoned and grabbed by the Muslim majority and the owners of such properties who have been reduced to absolute penury during the eight-year period of exile are forced to dispose of their left-behind assets in the form of denuded houses and cultivable lands and orchards. The Act also establishes the failure of the State and Central Governments in protecting their properties from the practising marauders who have inherited as bequest a history of rapacity and plunder. The governments could have protected the properties from the Muslim vandals without the formulation of such an Act as there are laws galore which could have been invoked to establish rule of law. It is absolutely shameful that the state which forms a part of Indian territory had to formulate a distinctive Act for the protection of Pandit properties despite citizenship rights that stand sanctified by the sovereign constitution. The governments should have immediately provided protection to the Kashmiri Pandit properties when the Pandits fell victim to the militarised Islam. Now when each habitation has been decimated and landed assets are grabbed the government as an eye-wash has rushed through the legislation without consulting the Kashmiri Pandits. The reality is that the Pandits are in distress and are constrained to sell off the properties to eke out an existence in camps and rented slums. The government should have come out with liberal loans on softer terms thereby enabling the Pandits to tide over the hardships that they are faced with during the period of wretched and unhappy exile.

The Act does not stipulate to put the predators and usurpers on trial for offences that they have committed thereby reducing a civilised society to the bottom level of barbarism and expelling even the feeblest ray of modernism and rationality.

A Report about vandalisation of Kashmiri Pandit Properties

A report in Kashmir Sentinel date-lined Dec, 15, 1995 puts:-

“After the vandalisation, destruction and forcible occupation of Kashmiri Pandit houses, it is now a land grab spree in Kashmir. The lands involved are those of displaced Kashmiri Pandit agriculturists and orchardists who had fled the valley four years back to escape the torture and tyranny of the terrorists.

Reports from different parts of the valley say that land holdings of hundreds of displaced KP families have so far been illegally taken over by the local Muslims who manage to get these lands mutated and indications are that hardly any agriculturist will be left with any land in his name in months to come.

The fraudulent transfers are being done and legalised by the officials of the State Revenue Department in return for alternative bribes. The method usually adopted by the land grabbers in connivance with Revenue officials, especially the Patwaris, is to get some local villagers as witnesses to testify that the land holdings in question had been sold or transferred by the owners to the concerned villagers.

Recently a number of fraudulent land deals came to light when the displaced Kashmiri Pandit agriculturists made enquiries about the fate of their land holdings back in the valley.

In one case in Baramulla district a village bully backed by a local terrorist group had not only grabbed the agricultural lands of a KP family, but also had laid his hands on the family's orchard. In another case in the same district the land owned by a Pandit family had been shown as belonging to the state by tampering with Revenue records.

Those who had grabbed the land had been entered in the records as rightful owners.”

The report further adds, “scores of orchards owned by displaced Kashmiri Pandits had fallen into the hands of unscrupulous Muslim villagers who made huge profits which they shared with the local terrorist groups. The land grabbing phenomenon has attained such alarming dimensions now that the State Government has issued a circular to check the fraudulent deeds.”

The Daily Uqab Srinagar date-lined Nov.27,1994 reports:-

“A large area of land and houses belonging to Kashmiri Pandits near Mohalla Faqir Wani in Baramulla have been taken over by some people and distributed among themselves. There are standing pear, apple and walnut trees in this land. The income from the produce of these trees is pocketed by these people. The police have not registered any case in this respect so far.”

Representation To The National Human Rights Commission

A humanistic organisation dedicated to the restoration of peace in the valley has taken up the case of Abdul Karim vs Brij Lal Tamiri with National Human Rights Commission. Abdul Karim S/o Mohammad Sultan Sheikh, an employee of Military Engineering Service, has illegally occupied the house of Brij Lal Tamiri at Shivapora, Srinagar which has remained vacant after the family fled away from their house in early 1990. After contacting DIG, Kashmir Range, the owner of the house was informed through an ordinary letter dated: 22nd May, 1996 that the illegal occupant had approached the court of city Munsif, Srinagar directing the parties to maintain status quo, thus allowing the illegal occupation of Brij Lal Tamiri's house by Abdul Karim.

After a thorough study of the case, the secretary of the NGO, Friends of Kashmir International, submitted a peti-

tion dated: 7th July 1996 to Hon'ble Chairman, NHRC, New Delhi which reads as under:-

" I have been directed by my NGO to seek your Lordships indulgence in a serious matter of violation of human rights of the internally displaced persons from Kashmir valley living in refugee camps in Jammu, Udhampur and other parts of the country since 1990.

It has come to the notice of our organisation that there are cases of forcible occupation by the locals of vacant residential houses, shops, cowsheds or hutments of displaced persons from the valley. These occupations are all illegal and unauthorised.

In order to regularise forcible and illegal occupation of these places, the entrepreneurs have contrived forged documents and filed suits in courts of law seeking *ex-parte* decisions to legitimise their forcible occupation. A fraudulent mechanism has been evolved of issuing court summons to the owners. The Honourable courts knowing fully well that respondents being a threatened minority community would not be able to attend its call. What is more, even the summons are invariably not received by the respondents as these do not bear the correct addresses of the displaced persons, or get lost in the ordinary mail. Even the notices issued in local vernacular papers do not reach the displaced persons. Taking undue advantage of the forced absence of the displaced persons far away from their native land for last seven years, their inability to protect their property in absence, their inability to present themselves before any court of law in the valley even if a summons is received by them and lastly unwillingness on the part of state authorities to enforce civil order these illegal occupants move the local courts swiftly to process *ex-parte* decrees against the displaced persons seeking to dispossess or disinherit them of their properties.

In all fairness the local courts should not at all entertain such applications as involve the properties of displaced per-

sons only if justice is to be done. But, somehow, in an unusual situation prevailing in the valley at present even the Honourable Judges would like not to be anything but accommodative even at the cost of Justice.

Your Lordship may kindly note that forcible occupation of the vacant houses or shelters of the displaced persons is violation of human rights (the right to property and shelter) and admission of any case in this regard by a local court in which case an *ex-parte* decision would be the procedural result is further violation of human rights because it denies the persons involved the chance to be heard owing to circumstances beyond control. Evidently the state government has the responsibility to protect the property of the citizens (that being the constitutional right of all Citizens of India) and if it fails in discharging that duty the displaced persons should not suffer on that count. They are already fouled and it should mean their re-foulment which is not only unjust but also inhuman. As if sending them into forced exile is too small a punishment which must be upgraded to forcible occupation of their property.

In the light of what has been submitted our organisation approaches the Hon'ble NHRC with the request that appropriate steps commensurate with the law and charter of human rights be taken at its earliest convenience to stop occupation of the vacant houses and immovable properties of the internally displaced persons from Kashmir either through muscle power or through fraudulent and illegal documentation. We would like to submit that proper steps be taken to give a fair chance to the displaced persons to follow legal proceedings wherever necessary in such cases only in Jammu and not in Srinagar. The threat to life by the armed militants prevents the internally displaced persons from presenting themselves before any court of law in the valley. The government could set up special tribunals in Jammu proper where such cases could be filed and heard. The state Judiciary is expected to demonstrate its responsibility in prevailing extra-ordinary conditions and spare the

suffering displaced persons the travail of unnecessary litigation for which they are neither mentally nor financially prepared.”

In another communication dated September 30, 1996 to the Hon'ble Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi the Secretary of Friends of Kashmir (India) conveys as under:-

“We are grateful to the Hon'ble Commission for informing us vide their letter No. 9/73/96-LD of August 1, 1996 that the matter of illegal occupation of Pandit houses in Kashmir valley submitted by us on 7th June, 96 has been taken up by the Hon'ble Commission with the concerned authorities in the J&K State. However, till date no state authority has contacted us nor do we know what action they would be contemplating to take in the matter.

Through our sources we learn that there is a spate in forcible and illegal occupation of Kashmiri internally displaced persons, left behind property by the locals in valley with tacit connivance of sections of administrative and judicial authorities. Fake documents are produced and accepted to claim proprietary rights over their houses, shops and immovable property. Physical absence of the owners from the scene and their continued inability to challenge false claims in a court of law encourages blatant irregularities. What is more, reluctance of authorities to devise practical and collective safe-guards against such lawlessness leading to a state of loot is deplorable.

Before we proceed to cite a few more cases, we would like to highlight the methodology employed to legalise false ownership based on the sample study of the forcible and illegal occupation of the residential house of one Brij Lal Tamiri (case already submitted to the Hon'ble Commission on June 7, 1996). These are as under:-

- i) Obtaining stay orders from a court of law even without any proof of the sale of property.
- ii) when the victim comes to know of fraudulent ownership, the stay order and appeals for transfer

of case to Jammu (for security reason), the opposition to the same is voiced on the plea that since the property is located in Kashmir valley it should not be heard by the Hon'ble Court in Jammu.

- iii) a fictitious name is shown as one of the defendants. He may be shown as intermediary for selling and described as a known person, relative or a friend. This serves the purpose of prolonging the case and would at the same time break the resolve of the victim. Then the victim could be forced to agree to distress sale of his rightfully owned property.
- iv) entire strategy of this litigation revolves round prolonging the case on one pretext or the other, slow down the legal procedure and oppose the case of transfer to Jammu.
- v) Knowing that occupation of the house of internally displaced persons is illegal, under the grab of stay order, the occupants resort to a large scale damaging of the house besides looting the left-over goods of the displaced victims.

Your lordship, in case of Brij Lal Tamiri, one Maharaj Krishen Watloo has been shown as a dependent, though no person of this name and address exists. No attorney has been given by the owner to anybody for sale of the house or for putting it on tenancy. But the Court has issued stay orders without any proof of purchase by the illegal occupant. This has forestalled the eviction by the police. In the meanwhile the occupant has resorted to a large scale damaging of the construction as the accompanying FIR indicates.

Your Lordship, we may be permitted to submit two more cases of forcible and illegal occupation of the left behind houses of internally displaced persons from the valley. In one case, a local English daily named Northlines of 24th August, 1996 has reported that one fruit merchant of district Pulwama in Kashmir contrived fraudulent sale deed of the residential house of Mrs P.G.(name withheld

by the newspaper) an internally displaced person originally residing in Hyderpora, Srinagar.

In another case, one Lassa Nath Bhat resident of Gouripora-Rawalpora tehsil and district Badgam in Kashmir valley issued a public notice in Kashmir Times of September 1, 1996 saying that somebody had produced fake documents and claimed the ownership of his left-behind residential house.

In view of the seriousness of the violation of human rights, especially the right to property, we are concerned in the matter and approach the Hon'ble Commission could besides holding an independent probe, advise the Government of J&K State to issue orders for:-

a) Stopping sale of any kind of immovable property of the internally displaced persons from the valley until the time they resume normal life in places of their origin.

b) appointing an independent tribunal headed by a High Court Judge based in Jammu. All cases of internally displaced persons' property could be referred to this Tribunal for speedy and summary disposal.

c) holding the forcible occupants responsible for damaging the house and looting of immovable property in it. Without a strong legal action this violation of human rights may not be stopped.

Many internally displaced persons are lodging FIRs with the police in Jammu stating that their houses/shops/orchards/lands have been fraudulently grabbed by muscle-men with the connivance of authorities. As such, the Hon'ble Commission should supervene and stop violation of the rights to property of the displaced persons. As and when more cases come to our notice, we shall submit these to your Lordship for proper disposal."

Grab of the Shop of M.K. Dass

M.K. Dass and Mrs Sheila Dass were in regular tenancy of a shop in the Akhara building, Maisuma. The shop as al-

leged is broken open, all medical goods and medicines have been spirited away and a Muslim is said to have grabbed the shop with the connivance of one Puran Shah who manages and overlords the Akhara properties. M.K. Dass has approached all concerned authorities for the restoration of the shop, but as alleged he is not heard. He even met the Chief Minister who promised him redressal, but nothing concrete has emerged. His correspondence with authorities makes a curious reading.

That the tenant of the shop was in regular tenancy is perhaps substantiated by the letter that the BSF authority wrote to the Divisional Commissioner. The letter reads:-

No. 311/16/OPS/15BN/96/730
 HQ Srinagar Frontier
 Border Security Force
 Srinagar (Kmr)
 09 Sept. 96

To
 The Divisional Commissioner,
 J&K Government
 Srinagar.

Sub:- Removal of Bunker/Payment of compensation in favour of Shri M.K.Dass Prop. M/s Jank Dass and Co. Budshah Chowk, Srinagar.

Sir,

Please refer to an application submitted by M.K.Dass, Prop. M/s Janki Dass and Co. Budshah Chowk, Srinagar (Copy enclosed for ready reference).

2. In this context, it is to inform you that the matter has been got enquired into depth through concerned Sector DIG/Unit Comdt and reveals following:-

a) During the year 1992, Security Forces were deployed in Kashmir valley and one bunker was constructed by security forces during that time to deal with militancy in the area in front of

AKHARA BUILDING gate. This bunker is strategically covering MAISUMA road as well as dominate Akhara Chowk and adjoining areas. This bunker also provides Security to Akhara building and checks the entry/exist of visitors to Akhara building.

- b) Since, Maisuma is the backbone of militancy and all sorts of demonstrations/ processions, grenade throwing are planned and conducted by public in Lal Chowk area, therefore presence of this bunker is essential to monitor the movement of the militants/public in the area.
2. The bunker in question is sited at appropriate place and tactically deployed. This bunker of course has obstructed the entrance to M/s Janki Dass and Co. but for Security reasons it is not possible for us to remove the said bunker.
3. Therefore, it is recommended that necessary compensation may be provided to the owner of the Shop, if deemed fit.

Yours faithfully
sd/-(S.Chauhan)

Addl. Deputy Inspector Genl
(Operations)

The Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Srinagar wrote to M.K.Dass which reads as under:-

Zonal Police Headquarters Kashmir Srinagar

No. Crime/Misc/97/1550

Dated:3.3.1997.

M.K. Dass
House No.01,
Sector No.10
Nanak Nagar Jammu.

Please refer your application regarding shop breaking/ replacing the shop locks by Puran Shah, Manager, Dashnami Akhra Trust with the assistance of local gundas and looting the medicines from the shop known as Janki Dass and Co. Chemists 16 Akhra building Budshah Chowk Srinagar.

Report called from concerned SP is enclosed.

sd/-Inspector General of Police
Kashmir Zone.3.3.97

M.K. Das has submitted to the Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone as under:-

To

The Inspector General of Police
Kashmir Zone.

Ref: No. M-2/97/SPE/64246 dateds. 27.2.97.

Sub:- Complaint against criminal trespass and looting of Goods/Cash records from a Shop M/s Janki Dass and Co. 16, Akhra Building Srinagar.

Sir,

In reference to above quoted letter on my application i.e; the application of Mr. M.K.Dass and Mrs. Sheela Dass. I am submitting the following few lines for clarification:-

1. That the shop is under the tenancy of Mahraj Krishan Dass and Sheela Dass. It is made clear that the shop under our tenancy belongs to Dashnami Akhra Trust and the tenancy started from 1961. However, earlier also the shop was in our constructive possession before 1961, being partners of a firm "Harker and Co."
2. It is also made clear that Sh. Janki Nath Dass, Father of M.K. Dass and B.L. Dass and father-in-law of Mrs. Sheela Dass expired in the year "1964" Nov. as such tenancy of the said-shop devolved on

Shrimati Janki Devi, widow of Shri Janki Nath Dass-II, Mr. B.L. Dass son of Sh. Janki Nath Dass III M.K. Dass S/o Janki Nath Dass. However it was Sh. B.L. Dass and Shri M.K. Dass who were working in the said-shop as the Proprietors of the firm M/s Janki Dass and Co.

3. That in the year 1990 on account of militancy above mentioned proprietors were forced to stop their business as the shop was located at a vulnerable place known as Budshah Chowk here a permanent BSF post was functioning in front of the shop and the militants used to attack the said-place.
4. It is pertinent to note that in the year 1992 a bunker was constructed by the Security Forces (BSF) to deal with the militancy in front of the shop and thereby obstructed the entrance and exit of customers to the shop. As there was no business conducted in the said-shop and because of militancy myself alongwith other family members shifted to Jammu. I used to visit Srinagar invariably with a purpose to transact my business in the shop as I and other members of the family were dependent on the income of the said-shop.
5. That on account of the increased index of militant acts a Pucca/concrete bunker was constructed completely closing the entry in the said-shop as the huge structure was built in front of the shop. Be that as it may, it is stated that the said-shop was full of medicines and other goods i.e; Thermameters, Cotton packs, Bandages, Sythethescopes, BP apparatus, air cushions, hot water bottles, baby soaps, oils and powders, surgical items like scissors, forceps, kidney trays, cadguts, etc. valued Rs. 4.00 lacs.
6. That in this connection I approached Director General BSF and other authorities to shift the bunker to some other site so that I could transact

my business in the said-shop but I was not allowed to open or continue my business by the BSF authority for reasons of security of the area as was intimated by them through a despatch dated Sept. 9, 1996 addressed to the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir. Moreover, they recommended the case for compensation to be paid to the firm M/s Janki Dass and Co. Nothing of the sort that expired medicines would prove dangerous and was advanced by them to the Management of the Trust was communicated to me which they could have done if the need was. It is worth to note that the concocted story furnished by the BSF authority to the management of the trust is nothing but explains a drama to camalouge their real involvement in this scandalous affair, where monetary consideration cannot be ruled out.

7. That I am in possession of the correspondence letters with the Home Ministry of India/State Governments and other concerned authorities of BSF which clarifies the aforesaid position.
8. That in response to the point mentioning that the firm did not pay any rent to the Management is all false and baseless. The fact is that no such default in payment of the rent has been ever committed either by late Pt. Janki Nath Dass or his predecessors. The firm has paid the rent up-to-date. The last receipt being of 15.11.89, then again a draft of Rs. 10,000/- on account was sent through a registered draft No. 04183 State Bank of India dt. 27.12.1996 addressed to Secretary Mahadev Giri, Dashnama Akhra Trust, Budshah Chowk, Srinagar but the same was deliberately returned back and avoided without furnishing any reasons by Akhra Management. I again sent the draft to the concerned but it met the same fate with the remarks that the addressee had left the place without leaving any address here which was all fraud

and fabricated. As the draft was addressed in the name of Secretary Dashnami Akhara Trust for which a routine office is functioning there was no question that the addressee had left the place. It transpires that Akhara Management in connivance with BSF authorities of the said post/bunker concocted a story of "Emitting foul smell" and wanted to remove the expired medicines from the shop as the chemicals could be dangerous in case of any explosion caused near the bunker is only to interfere and induct Manzoor Ahmed Narwari into the said premises as a trespasser and in this deal Puran Shah, Manager of the Trust, the BSF Personnel of the post/bunker and Manzoor Ahmed are party and therefore they are to be criminally prosecuted.

9. It is stated that because of my filing of an FIR they have not succeeded in dispossessing me, but if they are not dealt properly they can succeed in their nefarious designs. It is also stated what business had the Management of the Akhara Trust to break open the lock of my shop and then take out the medicines/goods valued about Rs.4.00 to 5.00 lacs. It is a clear case of trespass and theft.

I sincerely feel that the culprits are arrested and immediately punished.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

sd/- sd/-

(M.K.Dass) (Sheela Dass)

Fraudulent Allotment of Shops by the Executive Officer of Srinagar Municipality

Jagdish Lal, Bihari Kak, Vinod Kumar Suri, Manohar Lal Sadhana, and Raman Kumar were the tenants of the shops in the Municipal Building complex, Hazuribagh, Srinagar. As the Muslim terrorism had its thrust against the

Kashmiri Hindus, the tenants deserted their shops to take shelter in safer zones. In their absence the Executive Officer of Srinagar Municipality, some Ganai, is said to have allotted their shops to Muslims with the result their shops were broken open and goods pilfered or looted. The tenants moved earth and heaven for the redressal of injustice perpetrated on them, but to no effect. They called on the concerned Minister, Molvi Iftikar Hussian Ansari, who is an expert in prevarication and procrastination and has dragged his feet from using the whip of law against the intruders and defaulters for the fact that all involved are of the Muslim brand.

In a representation to the Chief Minister the tenants wrote:-

- a) We were allotted shops in the complex by Srinagar Municipality in the year 1977 for a period of 17 years with the clause that the lease period would be "renewable thereafter in favour of the lessee."
- b) In the year 1990 we along with lakhs of other members of the minority community were forced to migrate from Srinagar in the wake of wide spread violence. We locked our shops as we could not take them out because of turbulent conditions.
- c) While in migration we learnt that the shopping complex had been partially gutted in an incident of fire in July, 1990. However some shops including the one belonging to the applicant No.2 remained unaffected by the fire.
- d) Early this year we learnt that by taking advantage of the absence of the members of the minority community some unscrupulous officials of the Srinagar Municipality were reallocting their shops to third parties without following the process of law or without sending proper notices to the *bona fide* allottees of the said-shops.
- e) We have reasons to believe that the papers of allotment have been prepared illegally in a clandest-

tine manner by the Executive Officer of Srinagar Municipality, Mr. Ganai. In certain cases he has also forged the signatures of the earlier Administrator of Srinagar Municipality for illegally allotting the shops to others.

- f) The shops have been re-allotted at a premium of only Rs.30,000 per shop while the current market value of the shops is around Rs.7 lakhs each. We have authentic information to believe that Mr.Ganai has reportedly accepted Rs.2.00 lakhs per shop as illegal gratification from the illegal allottees of the said-shops.
- g) In case the shops that were not gutted in fire, the locks were broken open and goods worth lakhs stolen by the said official before allotting the shops to some other person.
- h) While none of the tenants of the shops of the said-complex including those who have been running their business from these shops for all these years has been paying rent to the Srinagar Municipality due to the troubled conditions in the valley. Only the migrants who have at least paid partial rent have been singled out for this treatment.
- i) In view of the foregoing it will be clear to your goodself that certain officials of Srinagar Municipality have tried to tarnish the image of the administration by acting in a manner contrary to the declared policy statements of the J&K Government as well as the Government of India. While the Union Ministers and bureaucrats belonging to both the Union Government and the State Government have time and again been voicing the resolve of the government regarding return of the Kashmiri migrants to the valley soon, these officials of the Municipality, just in order to make a quick buck, have been working against this policy by making all efforts to ensure that the migrants do not return to the valley.

Their action of re-allotment of the migrant shops is one step in this direction.

We, therefore, request your goodself to please use your good offices to ensure that the culprits in this case of blatant misuse of power and corruption are brought to book and the shops are restored to the original owners of the said-shops after making good the loss caused to them.

Dr. Kashi Nath Ticku's House Grabbed by the Government Department

Dr. Kashi Nath Ticku now an octogenarian has been in banishment for the last eight years. It is reliably learnt that he has been spending the evening of his life in Gujrat. He is pained and anguished to learn that his posh house at Jawahar Nagar in Srinagar city has been grabbed. After making thorough enquiries about the grab he learns that it is not a Muslim who has broken open his house and spirited away all the goods from his house but it is a Government Department that has occupied his house in his absence in exile. The Department in the hands of frauds, fanatics and unscrupulous elements has been in occupation of his house for purposes of running a school. Dr. Ticku has been on jaunts to Srinagar to get his house vacated and has been meeting the officers of the Department of Education to ensure the vacation of his house. It was after a long struggle that the officers of the Department agreed to pay him rent since the time the house has been under its occupation. But no rent has been paid to him so far. Every time he flies to Srinagar he has to re-open his case as the officers suffused with communal venom feign ignorance about the illegal occupation.

Dr. Kashi Nath Ticku is a doctor by profession and has been vitally linked with the so-called nationalist movement led by Sheikh Abdullah. What his contributions have been to the movement can be learnt from the galaxy of freedom

fighters who were honestly motivated for heralding a new era of democracy, liberalism and religious catholicism.

Felling of Poplars from a Kashmiri Pandit House and Hakim Ghulam Hassan

Hakim Ghulam Hassan is said to be a retired judge from the state judiciary. His house near Polytechnic, Gogjibagh, Srinagar is fringed by the house of a Kashmiri Pandit hailing from a respectable family of Mattoos from Rainawari. The house of the Pandit was deserted by the inmates when the Muslim killers started the murder of Kashmiri Pandits as they were labelled as the agents of India and anti-Muslim.

It was after a year or so that Hakim Ghulam Hassan is said to have informed his Kashmiri Pandit neighbour that he had sold the poplars growing within the premises of his house for a sum of Rs. 10,000 which he would be remitting to him very soon. The Pandit took Hakim Ghulam Hassan for his word and believed that the money would come to him sooner or later. But the hopes of the Pandit were belied. Money never came to him.

The Kashmiri Pandit in absolute despair is said to have gone on writing to his Muslim neighbour about the despatch of money. Ghulam Hassan is said to have proved callous and discourteous in not writing back to his Pandit neighbour. Ultimately the Kashmiri Pandit is said to have phoned him from Jammu and asked his immediate neighbour to send him the money that had accrued from the sale of poplars. Hakim Ghulam Hassan reportedly informed him that he had deposited the money in the treasury. The Pandit put the word "treasury" to an incisive analysis but could not come to any satisfying rational conclusion.

Hakim Ghulam Hassan perhaps meant that the money was deposited in the coffers of Muslim killers who are said to have earned full-scale support and succour from men of his breed.

10 DESTRUCTION AND DESECRATION OF TEMPLES

With the transformation of political power in Kashmir in 1339 A.D. the temples and cultural symbols of Hindu style came under severe Muslim onslaught. The Muslim rulers steeped in Islamic orientation with commitments to the forcible expansion of Islam desecrated, plundered and despoiled the temples and shrines manifesting the character of Hindu faith and thought. As amply supported by historical evidences Kashmir with its protracted history dating back to antiquity has been a Buddhist, Vaishnavite and Shaivite seat and as such has witnessed amazing levels of cultural growth and flowering with their visible imprint on viharas, caityas and temples dotting every inch of Kashmir soil. As has been the common practice with Muslims a concerted campaign of bigotry was generated with the state apparatus in the lead role to defile and destroy temples and other cultural expressions of Hindus fascistically declaring them as un-Islamic thereby sealing any intellectual effort to probe their aesthetics and cultural value. The destructive campaign as a result of religious prepossessions and paranoia has continued with no relent with *apriori* objective of dismantling and annihilating a cultural ethos suffused with the ingredients of tolerance, assimilation and wider vision of understanding. With narrow perspectives in view and hate syndrome as a motivating factor no efforts have been spared to scatter the bacilli of iconoclasm to establish Muslim cultural domination coupled with obscurantism giving rise to an ethos antithetical to the ideals of harmony, co-existence and peace.

It will be in the fitness of things to put that the total history of Muslims in Kashmir spans over a period of six hundred years and it has been a period of crusade chasing the twin objectives of conversion and iconoclasm which are two faces of the same operation. Jonraj as an historian of eminence was a witness to the forcible conversion of the Hindus of Kashmir and the desecration and demolition of the Hindu temples and cultural signs and symbols akin to the faith. The iconoclastic character of Islam was well within the range of his observation and experience when he with the bold flourish of his pen dilated on the desecration and destruction of Hindu temples wrought by Muslims who in obedience to their religious promptings flashed the naked weapon of force to expand the Islamic base with a view to earning the promised religious compensation. Jihad or holy war has been the instrument to desecrate and level massive stone structures of temples and to convert the Hindus to the faith of Islam. The Sayyids, the Chaks, the Mughals and the Afghans harnessed and pressed into service their political power and authority to realise the conversion and with a view to achieving the objective it became imperative to decimate and obliterate the colossal religious and cultural symbols of Hindus especially their temples and shrines.

The first bacilli of iconoclasm were sown the day when the Muslim rulers under obligation to a fiat issued by a proselytiser masquerading as a Sufi resorted to the tyrannical measure of stopping the Hindus from fresh constructions of temples and shrines for idol-worship and disallowing them to execute repairs to the existing ones lying in a state of collapse and ruin.⁵⁰ Startling records were set in the destruction of temples and other symbols of Hindu culture. The materials from the destructed temples were looted and wantonly utilised to build mosques and hospices and in most of the cases plinths were not ravaged but kept intact and mosques built and imposed on the temple sites. The Muslim iconoclasm did not spare the sculptural treas-

ures amazingly creative and superb in conception and execution and reflective of an intolerant culture model it was pursued with religious zeal to hasten Islamisation with a view to reducing Kashmir to a Muslim ghetto.

Art connoisseurs throughout the world will feel shocked to learn that gun power as a hardware of war was harnessed by Muslims to destruct and despoil the temples which religion and art wise are the churches of the Hindus. When destruction could not be achieved through the blasting material, the Jungles in the proximity of the temples were felled to use them as fuel for setting the gigantic structures ablaze. The tremendous heat generated through the burning of logs of wood split the chiselled stones and set them violently asunder with the result the massive structures fell and crumbled in a pile of ruins. The brutality was not inflicted on one temple but was heaped without an exception on the giant temples studding the gem of the valley. The ruins of Martand, Avantipur, Tapar, Parihaspur, et al are mute witnesses to the depredations and ravages wrought by Muslims.

The Muslim iconoclasts, ignorant, puerile and pervert, harboured no sense of guilt when they destroyed the sparkling specimens of Kashmirian architecture signalling a new apogee through a blend of indigenous style with the Greek and Roman styles. The lofty pyramidal roofs were dismantled. The trefoiled doorways covered by pyramidal pediments were broken with hammers. Colonnades fashioned after the Greek model were removed. The said-materials were either sadistically destroyed or used in mosques where their artistic loftiness and grandeur were lost. The losses thus rendered to the mosaic of world culture were colossal and incredible.

The Temple of Martand built on a plateau amidst enthralling natural ambience is a unique marvel in stone symbolising through its distinctive style a celebrated classical order comparable to the architectural orders that have flowered as mile-stones during the whole course of evolu-

tion. Shocking as it is the same stone temple, solid and enduring, was put to the orgy of devastation through gun power and when sufficient quantities of it were not readily available, its foundations were dug deep and chiselled and skilfully carved stones removed filling the gaping wounds with logs of wood and putting them afire.⁵¹ Prior to the destructive process huge hammers were cruelly used for one full year to destroy and vandalise its wealth of masterly sculptural works of immense artistic merit and value.⁵² The same destruction was wrought on the massive stone temple at Bijbehara which was famed as the city of temples.⁵³ It was pillaged and destroyed and its well carved - out stones with engraved figurines of gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon were utilised for the construction of a hospice which is not a patch on the original temple. The temples were so massive in size and dimension that it was difficult to believe that they could be the handiwork of human endeavour.

Remarks Sir Walter Lawrence, "While the old Hindu buildings defy time and weather, the Musalman shrines and mosques crumble away. Other foreign travellers have recorded that Hindu temples were built to endure for all time. Their solidity of construction and their gigantic size strike one with wonder that puny men could have built them. They often gazed upon them with amazement and lamented bigoted Muslim fanatics who laid them to ruins with tremendous effort."⁵⁴

The temples at Tapar (Pratap-pur) that were built by the queen of a Hindu ruler, Pratapaditya, were amazing marvels of Hindu architecture. The ruthless Muslims destroyed them with vengeance and are now in a dilapidated condition. What is astonishing that a Muslim ruler, Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) A.D. who withdrew the despicable levies on Pandits and re-settled them in Kashmir after they were forcibly expelled from Kashmir thus earning kudos for his exemplary tolerance, utilised the huge temple stones and Hindu idols to build a bund from Naidkhai to

Sopore. If figurative meaning of his visit to Sharda, a centre of Hindu pilgrimage now in Pakistan, is drawn from what Jonraj writes about it, it can be averred that he was responsible for the desecration, breakage and destruction of the wooden idol of ancient origins at the highly revered place of worship.⁵⁵

The Mughal emperors who were enamoured of the beauty of Kashmir valley have been extolled for their tolerant credentials, but on the basis of available authentic evidences it can be said that they were the same fanatic in matters of dismantling and devastating the religious places of Hindus. It is surprising to learn that Jehangir in his religious fury dismantled the flight of steps linking the Temple of Shankaracharya to the river Jehlum near the Temple of goddess Tripursundary. Nurjehan as his celebrated queen utilised the same chiselled and sculptured stones to erect a massive mosque known as Pathar Masjid. The Muslims never used the mosque for prayers not for the fact that it was built with looted materials from a temple but because it was constructed at the instance of a woman who was a Shia-Muslim by faith and creed. The same mosque was declared as property of the state by the Sikh commander, Phula Singh, on the genuine plea that it was built with the materials dismantled and looted from a temple. The Muslims raised a hue and cry as the mosque continued to be locked in Dogra times and it was under a British conspiracy that the mosque was returned to the Muslims who trumpeted its occupation by the state as a great symbol of tyranny.

The Narparistan Temple built by a Hindu ruler was forcibly occupied and turned into a Muslim shrine by the installation of a grave (to sanctify the grab) in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. The Kashmiri Pandits not taking the brutality lying down locked horns with the Muslim rabids and recovered its possession from the unlawful occupants. But Muslims mobilised their ranks, screamed Jihad to grab it away from the Pandits and installed a new

grave to maintain and fortify the forcible occupation. The famous temple at Skand Bhawan at the head of a spring was desecrated and the spring of oozing waters blocked by hurling of huge stones and boulders and re-christened as the shrine of Pir Mohammad Basur.⁵⁶ The Dedamar Temple was also levelled and demolished and was forcibly converted into the Tomb of Malik Sahib.⁵⁷ The temples at Amrita Bhawan were laid waste and the site was occupied and converted into shrines and burial grounds.⁵⁸

It was Praversena II, the founder of the city of Srinagar, who had constructed a country residence for a reputed Hindu saint on the north-eastern corner of the Dal Lake.⁵⁹ Bernier who accompanied Aurangzeb in his visit to Kashmir has exposed the iconoclastic activities of Shah Jehan, a famous Mughal emperor. In his travelogue Bernier records that the doors and pillars carved out of stone that were used in the Shalimar garden built on the same area of villa were looted from some temples which were demolished by Shan Jehan. And Bernier comments that their artistic grandeur and value was beyond estimate.

The famous Temple of Shiva Pravareshwar was demolished and with its looted materials was built the shrine of Baha-ud-Din Sahib.⁶⁰ The grave-yard that surrounds the shrine is a repository of many ancient remains that have been used in walls and tombs. The ruins of a gate-way lying at one corner of the grave-yard are still existing and the stone blocks of which the gate-way is built are of exceptional dimensions. As the Muslims have no strong tradition in erecting shrines with stone blocks, it is authentically held that they are the materials of Shiva pravareshwar Temple.

The Jamia Mosque situated in the vicinity of the shrine of Baha-ud-Din is surrounded by numerous temple stones and massive pillars lending strong credence to the belief that it was built on the site of a Vishnu temple which was worshipped and adored by Kashmiri pandits. It has been the site of a Buddhist Vihara as well which must have

stood close by it. The Buddhists from the region of Ladakh still bow at the site with a deep sense of veneration.

The temple of Vishnu Ranaswamin⁶¹ which as per the noted historian Kalhana was erected by Ranaditya was subjected to the Muslim fury of desecration and destruction and ultimately suffered the orgy of its conversion into the shrine of Pir Haji Mohammad. The Muslim shrines situated at Zakura (Juskapur) are built out of the materials from temples that were destructed. Again, the shrine of Farrukzad Sahib is constructed at the site where there stood a massive temple dedicated to Amareshwar⁶² and contains the remains of the destructed shards of temple. There were temples built on an inlet of Anchar Lake which were demolished and their looted materials utilised in the construction of tombs and shrines. The shrine of Khawaja Khizar is built with the ruins looted from a temple.

The temple of Vishnu-Padamaswamin⁶³ of considerable fame at Pampore was plundered and levelled and its delicately chiselled columns and ornamented slabs were utilised in the erection of the shrine of Mir Mohammad Hamadani and other Muslim shrines standing in the same locality.

The ancient site of Parihaspur on the plateau of Paraspur was vandalised and destroyed by the Muslim vandals. As is historically established the site was littered over with Hindu temples and Buddhist Viharas and caityas.⁶⁴ The places of worship consecrated to gods and goddesses of Hindu and Buddhist religions were built by the great conqueror, Lalitaditya, who is also credited with the completion of the Martand Temple of considerable repute. The same saga of destruction is connected with the temples and shrines dotting the Hariparbat Hillock which were demolished, grabbed and converted into shrines and mosques.

The temple grab and destruction as the rallying point of Muslim Jihad failed to abate in its tidal wave even under the rule of the Dogras who professed Hindu faith and belief. The Islamic forces having a distinct narrow and

communal stream continued their onslaught on temples and Hindu-style cultural symbols. Brute force was let loose to forcibly occupy the temple at Sahyar in the capital city of Srinagar. Blatant attempts were made to grab the Bhairav Nath Temple at Chattabal, but in face of Kashmiri Pandit resistance the Muslim Communal forces had to beat a temporary retreat. The bigoted elements in the police force came down heavy on the Pandits who were vigorously vociferous in their demand for handing over the Laleeshwari Temple back to them as it was unlawfully grabbed and occupied by the Muslims. The Glancy commission constituted by Maharaja Hari Singh in 1931 unjustifiably rejected the Pandit demand for the restoration of the possession of Hariparbat and Shankaracharya Hillocks to the Kashmiri Pandits on the flimsy and untenable ground of the existence of some graves on their foot-hills. The Buddhist sites with established historical background were not returned to the care the possession of & Pandits who had to be punished for their anti-British stances and sentiments.

The momentous event of Jammu and Kashmir acceding to the Union of India in 1947 did not bring spectacular cheer and relief to the native Kashmiri Pandits. Instead a new storm of destruction gathered for them leaving them bereft and beleaguered. As hapless victims to a tyrannical order the state governments of all political hues vigorously worked out the single-point programme of marginalising and edging them out of their natural habitat for ethnic cleansing. Besides political and economic oppression and elimination they had to face governments under tight leash of the Muslims who contrived, aided and abetted the bigoted arts of laying claims to the temples and their properties. The temple lands, cremation grounds and holy springs reinforced by relevant documents as properties of Pandits faced immediate onslaught and were first held in dispute by resorting to tampering of records and other fraudulent methods and subsequently usurped by whipping up reli-

gious frenzy with a view to expanding Islam and its reigning sway. In 1978 various SROs issued by the government not only fortified and strengthened the Muslim Auqaf Act but also fiated the Muslims to grab the temple lands without check and constraint for their transmission to Muslim Trusts. Not fewer than 70 temples and lands attached with them were cruelly confiscated from the possession of the Pandits who proffered their claims supported by relevant revenue records but were arbitrarily dismissed and rejected. The temples of historical importance were aggressed and huge portions from them sliced away to be offered to the Muslims as booty in a platter. The spot of vethavothur as the source of Vitasta worshipped by the Kashmiri Pandits as manifestation of Siva's grace was pushed into a dispute and encroached upon through generation of mass frenzy. Lok Bhawan with its mention in Rajtarangini was turned into a hot spot by grabbing the lands attached with the Temple from hoary ages. The holy spring at Anantnag was wantonly aggressed and huge chunks of land attached with it were fascistically sliced away for transfer to the Muslims. Lands measuring 55 kanals belonging to the Durganath Temple as the precious property were straightaway grabbed only to beef up the landed wealth of the Muslim Auqaf Trust. The lands attached with the Hariparbat Hillock were never offered protection by various governments from the concerted Muslim onslaught and were subsequently grabbed and confiscated from the helpless Pandits. The path for parikrama around the Hillock which is central to the theme of Kashmir's birth and its cultural history was dug out and the earth carried to fill the Muslim Auqaf lands.

The Dewan Shiva Temple of Fateh Kadal⁶⁵ has borne infinite scars stabbed on it by noisy mobs of Muslim intolerants. Its outer walls facing the road-side have been felled and damaged umpteen times. Whenever there is a volcanic eruption of violence mostly on superficial grounds, the said - temple emerges as the prime target of desecra-

tion, demolition and arson. On 26th of January 1989 the minority community of Kashmiri Pandits was held in a total grip of fear and panic when a thousand strong mob of Muslims wielding weapons desecrated and damaged the Dewan Shiva Temple. The strong door of the temple refused to give way and the Muslim mob indulging in vandalism removed the idols in the open worship enclosure quite adjacent to the main temple and hurled them into the running gutter. All attempts were made to put the temple on fire. The government playing its tune to the unison of Muslim storm-troopers had advance information about threat to peace on this day, but no arrangements, stiff or lenient, were made to provide protection to the minority community and its culture symbols. The attack on the temple was led and organised by the pro-Pakistan cadres of people's League, Kashmir Liberation Front, Muslim Students Federation and Islamic Students League thriving under tremendous patronage from the government headed by Farooq Abdullah and his cohorts.

The Hanuman Temple at Hari Singh Street, Srinagar⁶⁶ attracting large crowds of Hindus for worship has been subjected to the worst forms of desecration and plunder at the hands of Muslim marauders. It is not once but numberless times that the presiding idols in the temple have been desecrated, lifted and hurled into the Jehlum at the shores of which the temple is situate. The latest brand of violence inflicted on the temple was when the Muslims and the Sikhs forging an alliance at the behest of two secessionist leaders, one from the Punjab and the other from Kashmir, organised a massive procession against the Kashmiri pandits. Starting from the Gurudwara in Lal Chowk, Srinagar the procession was immediately joined by the Muslims as per the pre-meditated plans and crossing the old Amira Kadal Bridge it ran amok and desecrated, looted and plundered the Hanuman Temple. Replicating the history of vandalism the main idol was plucked out from the sanctum sanctorum and thrown despicably into the flowing

waters of the Jehlum. The procession yelling "Muslims and Sikhs are brothers. Where from have Pandits come"? forged ahead towards Hazuri Bagh and put the Arya Samaj Mandir to flames. And ultimately the Muslims and the Sikhs in a Joint operation burnt down the Nirankari Bhawan. Be it put that the Nirankaris are bete noire of the Sikhs.

The Temple at Ganpatyar in Srinagar consecrated to the god Ganpati with its history embedded in the misty past has a woeful saga to relate as it has suffered scares of defilement and demolition at the hands of so-called rational nationalists and sinister communal elements day in and day out. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as a result of the cratic political rivalries in Pakistan was brutally hanged and Muslims of Srinagar with a deep streak of pathology in their collective personality lost their shirt and pelted stones at the Ganpatyar Temple as a tactic to keep the Pandits on tenterhooks. The Arabs lost a war to the Jews and with a view to boosting the morale of the fleeing soldiers the Muslims took out a massive procession yelling out trenchant anti-Jew slogans. While passing by the side of the said-temple standing calm and tranquil, they ran berserk, pelted the temple, damaged its gates and walls with all the Islamic vigour. Desecration to some pages of the Muslim Holy Book manipulated by some political miscreants to arouse public wrath sparked off demonstrations massive in size and scale, and the Ganpatyar Temple fell a victim to the Muslim fury. Farooq Abdullah won an election and his Muslim supporters frantically celebrating his victory by flaunting V-signs pelted the entire Hindu habitation including the temple.

The Muslim marauders, violent and highly aggressive, supporting the agitation that was unleashed at the behest of Srinagar Bar Association in thick contacts with the powers that be burnt the entire shopping complex of the Somyar Temple of Habbakadal⁶⁷. The shop-keepers suffered enormous losses and also lost their source of liveli-

hood. The government of Farooq Abdullah discernibly in cahoots with the swelling tide of Muslim insurgency did not bat an eye-lid at their plight as the victims involved were all Kashmiri Pandits who had been scored off its slate of policy and planning to meet the ends of ethnic cleansing. A reign of terror was let loose against the Pandit community. Their houses were set ablaze. The temple at Sathu Barbarshah was torched. The Pandits protested, demonstrated and clamoured for security and pleaded for justice, but all in vain. A mammoth public meeting of Kashmiri Pandits held within the temple precincts to lodge a protest against the outrage was stoned by the Muslim rabids. Scores of protestors were injured and the police posse failed to act. All the Kashmiri Pandit for a sensing the holocaust that was in store for them forged a Joint front to fight the government discrimination and apathy towards the community. Peaceful protests were organised, dharnas held and representations shot. But nothing concrete could emerge.

In its editorial date-lined 20th Nov, 1987 the Martand as the official organ of the Kashmiri Pandit ethno-religious minority has recorded, "The community had not fully recovered from the shock of Shri A.K.Ganjoo at Sathu Barbarshah on Tuesday, the 10th of November, when we had to suffer the burning of minority shops in Habbakadal and a temple at Barbarshah on Tuesday the 17th of November, in the wake of the second day of the bandh sponsored by the Srinagar Bar Association. The terror and vandalism let loose on Tuesday resulting in the total destruction of property worth lakhs of rupees and burning of one temple at Sathu Barbarshah speaks well of the organisation and tenacity of mischievous elements trying to stir up communal tension in the valley. The violent mobs who held the city in hostage for the whole day were ably supported by police indifference and apathy. These mobs were so to say freely allowed to damage and destroy whatever came their way. It appeared that the entire civil adminis-

tration was not only drowsy and inactive but in total disrepair.

We have often referred to the fact that whenever leaders of various political parties are at loggerheads with one another or whenever they have to cover up their inadequacies or incompetence they find it convenient to turn to this tiny minority and make them scapegoats for their own misdeeds. We are constrained to say that the system which surrounds us is totally rigged against the minority community.

We cannot be happy at the frequent eruption of violence in the state and the minority is the main victim in majority of cases whenever such violence breaks out. We have often cited concrete instances of loot, murder, burning of property of the minority community and of government's inability to bring the culprits to book in such instances.

We are not certain whether we should call the attitude of the government towards the agitation sponsored by the Srinagar Bar Association as political amateurism or sheer complicity. During the ten days of the Srinagar Bar's boycott of courts in support of the government's Darbar Move order of October 7, the state government never cared to issue an appeal to the Srinagar bar to call off their boycott."

The captain crews of Pro-Pakistan forces operating under a religious veneer never relented in their unmitigated campaign to capture and devastate the temples and shrines with their origins in the ancient past of Kashmir. The sacred shrine of Muran in Pulwama fell victim to the Muslim bigotry and three sacred springs of this historical shrine of ancient origins were filled with stones and boulders and captured and occupied with maximum support from broad sections of Muslim populace. The government of the day already in the lap of fundamentalist forces did not bother to act and respond though protests were lodged and petitions submitted.⁶⁸

Swami Nandlalji as a spiritualist of great standing with acceptability among large sections of Muslims had established an ashram (hermitage) at Tikar in north of Kashmir. The Muslim storm-troopers burnt it to ashes with absolute vengeance. The total assets of the hermitage were lost in the devastating fire. The law-enforcing agencies allowed law to be torn to tatters and shreds. The arsonists with established records in loot, murder and arson were never chased, captured and put on trial.⁶⁹

The loot, plunder and destruction of temples and shrines was not the handiwork of thieves and burglars but as borne out by irrefutable facts had the connivance and complicity of various brands of politicals chasing the secessionist agenda which seemed to have state sponsorship and patronage. A gangster was caught red-handed with incendiary material on his person at the highly venerated shrine of Chakreshwar on the Hariparbat Hillock. The police posse mounting vigil on the shrine did not report the incident to the relevant quarters. On getting the wind of it the devotees at the shrine raised hue and cry, contacted the government authorities and impressed on them the dire necessity of curbing the looters and arsonists. However some arrests were made though reluctantly and persons involved were charged with theft, burglary and violation of Arms Act. It came as a rude shock to the Kashmiri pandits when politicals strained their every nerve to secure their safe release. The vandals were none other than the Muslim youth operating under political patronage to undermine communal peace and amity with a view to expelling the Pandits from their native land.⁷⁰ It is pertinent to put that the Al-Jehad activists pledged to the mission of destruction of Pandits and their properties were the front-rank workers of National conference with its dominant membership from the Plebiscite frontiers.

The Muslim rabids in their relentless and untiring campaign for the grab of the Hindu shrines suddenly generated Muslim frenzy for constructing a mosque on the strip of

land that legally belonged to the Papaharan shrine. The government authorities were contacted and apprised of the sinister plans of the Muslim fanatics who harbour least respect for law of the land. They perhaps had given them go-ahead signals became apparent when the rabids were not stopped in their tracks of building a mosque on the land-area attached with the shrine and encroachment, already made, was not cleared. The Superintendent of Police and Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Anantnag who were forced through the intervention of a Hindu Minister to arrive on the trouble-spot were shown and given the copies of the revenue records relevant to the case thereby debunking the Muslim claims. Being Muslims of the treacherous stock they declared to the Muslims that revenue records had neither relevance nor sanctity. Such a declaration on part of the two government officers expected to be fair and equitable boosted the morale of the law-breakers who conceived and coined every coercive measure to stop the Pandits from fencing the land area with the result that it was left open to trespass and grab. A land-area of 15 kanals and 10 marlas as was buttressed and reinforced by revenue records was attached with the shrine.⁷¹

The Additional Secretary of Farooq Abdullah said to be a pimp or a tout was found feting, wining and dining in the company of a Muslim girl in a particular house at Anantnag. The Muslims got the wind of it and felt extremely enraged. Their wrath should have visited on the persons involved in lechery, but in their rabid hate they targeted a temple which was desecrated, pillaged and looted. Its glass-panes were pelted and broken. The photographs of gods and goddesses worshipped by Kashmiri Pandits were destructed in Islamic fashion. The assets of the temple were looted as booty. The formality of contacting the police was carefully observed and as usual no notice was taken of the acts of vandalism indulged in by the vicious Muslim elements. Prior to this vandalism the Nandkeshwar shrine at Wanpoh was desecrated and plun-

dered and a temple at Danois village in Kulagam Tehsil was ransacked and looted in similar fashion.

The Martand date-lined 26th July, 1985 carried an article by P.N.Bhat who had observed, "Kashmiri Pandit community stand on cross-road of history with all evil forces poised against it. Not a single day passes without report from some village, town or mohalla in the city regarding an assault here or theft of an idol there. Land grab of the community has become the order of the day. During the last three months historical holy shrines of Kashmiri Pandits in Vetesta verinag, Tehsil Duru, Siligam Shivala, a shrine in Tehsil Pahalgam and Lok Bhawan in Duru Tehsil have been desecrated. There is a planned conspiracy to harass this unfortunate community by patronised anti-social elements who have, it seems, earned the anticipatory clemency of ruling parties since 1947. It has been established beyond any shadow of doubt that in this organised assault, be it Vetesta, Siligam, Lok Bhawan or Tral, all the political parties, Jammaat-i-Islami, National Conference (F), National Conference (K) and Congress (I) join hands and have not even a word of condemnation against these encroachments, abuses and attacks on the members of the minority community. It is a matter of police and intelligence record that all important leaders of National Conference (F) and Congress(I) have given their tacit approval and active support to these lawless lizards for belabouring the minority community at Siligam and Lok Bhawan. The local administration is directed on telephone not to execute the warrants against the known miscreants and pressure is mounted on them to exact concessions from the minority community. This community is being asked to surrender even what is left behind by the encroachers at the point of gun."

Gautam Nag associated with the highly revered name of Gautam Rishi has been sacred to the Kashmiri Pandits and other Hindus who take a dip in its holy waters before they resume their march to the cave of Amar Nath in the moun-

tainous region. Motivated by the same hate syndrome Qazi Nissar, the Mirwaiz of South Kashmir, with deep pledges to the Muslim secessionist politics based on sheer bigotry operating under the protective wings of Mufti Mohammad Sayyid, the then Congress Chief, added a new chapter to the Islamisation campaign and communal tension which he ably and tenaciously orchestrated and heightened by issuance of Friday calls to capture Gautam Nag shrine. He rose like a meteor in the skies of communal politics in Kashmir when he himself cut a ram on a day sacred to the Hindus and issued Friday calls to the Muslims purporting to aggress the Hindu shrine for grab and occupation. Not only did he coin a new etymology of Gautam Nag but also concocted a story that a Muslim saint, a neo-convert to Islam, used to sit at the site for peace and rest. The Muslim Auqaf declaring that all Muslim properties were under its protective care and management had no impact on Qazi Nissar who through his rude deportment and fanatic rabble-rousing came to be seen as the pale version of Sikandar, the iconoclast.

Qazi Nissar said to have risen from rags to riches went on giving Friday calls to the Muslims to fortify their ranks for aggression on the shrine. The process continued with no relent with a view to keeping the communal cauldron on non-stop simmer. On every Friday call as could be observed droves of Muslims got collected in unprecedented numbers, fretting and fuming, bespattering and inveighing, ready on a nod to maraud, plunder and capture the shrine. To deter the Pandits from building a response they were reviled and humiliated and their residential quarters were pelted and they were subjected to physical assaults. The government of the day sunk in pathetic negligence and inertia appeared at the fuelling end and had given ample signals that it had a common cause with terrorism. Ultimately the Gautam Nag shrine was aggressed, its dharamshallas were burnt to cinders and the Mahant living within the premises of the shrine was cruelly beaten and spat at.

The government under the helmsmanship of Farooq Abdullah declared the shrine as disputed and appointed a petty Assistant Commissioner for adjudication of the title.

The Kashmiri Pandits not only in Anantnag but throughout the length and breadth of the valley were deeply anguished and shocked and immediately opened up channels of communication with the government authorities inside and outside the state. The relevant and authoritative records and documents were culled and gleaned and submitted for perusal. Qazi Nissar acting in tandem with the government authorities did not relent in his vicious campaign for adding momentum to communal discord and tension, strife and disorder. The lawless elements under patronage of the political class were in the process of proliferating their base on ground for hiving Kashmir from the political organisation of India.

The Anantnag Prabandhak Committee in its emergency session on 21st of February 1989 was unequivocal and forthright in its condemnation of the wave of communalism unleashed by Qazi Nissar and rejected his utterances about the Gautam Nag shrine as false and spurious. The committee also resolved to apprise the Chief Minister of the state and the Central government about the strengthening of communal forces as a result of thinning of secularist ranks. The deluge of resolutions passed and issued out by the Kashmiri Pandit organisations and fora expressed their explicit intent to contact the Sadhu Samaj at Allahabad that is committed in word and deed to the safe-guarding of Hindu interests all over the country.

The communal politics with its pointed thrust against the molecular minority of Pandits was highlighted by the Martand, date-lined 24th of March, 1989 under the caption "will Qazi Nissar-Farooq Abdullah collusion set Kashmir ablaze"? The government was openly charged with a conspiratorial nexus with the monsters of rabid hate who were doggedly working to the nefarious end of disseminating inter-community hatred and disaffection. The mullahs of

varied brands that were imported into Kashmir were preaching Jihad for the achievement of political objectives with their sharp thrust against Kashmiri pandits. The armed battle between the Iranian Hajis and the Saudi security forces and the explosion at Faizabad ammunition dump provided grist to the mill of Muslim violence against the religious enemies. The communal propaganda that was politically motivated and officially regulated was invested with vigour and stridency to realise the goal of denuding Kashmir of Hindu culture symbols with the implicit underpinning that Kashmir had ceased to be a cup of tea for the Pandits.

The Muslim onslaught on temples and Hindu culture symbols touched a new water-mark in the wake of Muslim terrorism sweeping the valley. Heinous crimes were committed in grabbing, desecrating, demolishing and setting ablaze the Hindu places of worship. Alarm bells were tolled when hundreds of temples and shrines in the district of Anantnag were razed to the ground, their properties looted and pillaged. Despite the disinformation campaign launched by B.G. Vergese and Harvinder Baweja through the columns of "India Today" the fact remains that the Muslim insurgency holding aloft the banner of Muslim Jihad against the miniscule minority of Pandits has destroyed and plundered temples and shrines of historical importance with a view to exterminating infidelity from the soil of Kashmir. There is hardly a village or a town where temples and shrines have not been destroyed, desecrated and demolished. Some temples desecrated and damaged in Kashmir from 1990 onwards are under :-

1. Dashnami Akhara, Srinagar

The temple in the Akara has been a chronic eye-sore to the Muslim fanatics. There was a park laid out within its premises. There were dharamshallas for the sadhus and hermits for their short sojourn and a residence for the mahant who looks after the entire shopping-cum-office

complex. It has not been attacked once but has a history of attacks at the hands of Muslim rabids. Dashnami Akhara is the place where-from the pilgrimage for Amar Nath starts every year with religious rites and zeal. The same Akhara was put to flames by the frenzied Muslim mobs causing tremendous damage and destruction to the temple and the material properties attached with it. The Akhara is managed by the Dharmarth Trust which perhaps did not deem it apt to lodge a protest with the government authorities on the desecration and damage of the temple.

2. Ganpatyar Temple

Ganpatyar Temple has been the butt of attacks whenever Muslims in their volcanic fury erupt on streets to show down jews, to mourn the death of Zia-ul-Haq, to burn the copies of Satanic verses written by a Muslim or to show down India if her team has defeated Pakistan. With the launch of Muslim terrorism the said-temple has been bombed umpteen times and subjected to rocket attacks twice to say the least.

3. Shiva Temple, Jawahir Nagar, Srinagar

The property of the temple that was stuffed in the dharamshalla was brought out alongwith some idols of the temple. Some utility items were looted as usual and other items considered inconsequential were put on fire. The idols were hurled away in absolute disrespect and contumely.

4. Raghu Nath Mandir, Anantnag

It was put to bomb blasts at least nine times. The same has been confirmed by the Mahant of the temple.

5. Gautam Nag Temple, Anantnag

The temple having two storeys was burnt to ashes even though the Homeguards were placed on duty there to save it from the Muslim marauders. A plethora of Sanskrit

manu scripts in Sharda script were lost in the devastating fire. The orchard attached with the temple was mercilessly felled.

6. Three temples of Lok Bhawan, Anantnag

The temples had suffered Muslim wrath in 1986. The then governor, Jagmohan, had got them repaired. They were again put to an orgy of fire in the wake of terrorist avalanche menacing the valley. The dharamshalla was burnt. The temples were damaged and destructed.

7. Shailputri Temple, Baramulla

The temple has been completely burnt. The main idol of the Shail-putri riding on an ox was attacked and its arms and legs axed. The whole complex is devastated. The walls surrounding the area have been damaged. The idol of Shailputri in its mutilated form is in the protective custody of B.S.F. personnel. The propaganda launched from various media agencies about the execution of repairs to the devastated temple complex with the aid of locals has been only a lie among many lies told about the secular polity of Kashmir lying in a shambles.

8. Wanpoh Mandir, Anantnag

The temple was repaired and face-lifted after it suffered desecration and demolition in 1986 as a result of Muslim bigotry. The Muslim marauders have again publicly desecrated it on 21st of February, 1992.

9. Bhairavnath Mandir, Baramulla

It was desecrated and damaged in 1990. The scars inflicted on the temple can be visibly seen.

10. Rupabhawani Mandir, Vaskura

The temple consecrated to the saint poetess, Rupabhawani, was subjected to the worst brand of desecration. The idols inside the temple have been removed and utility goods as part of assets of the temple have been looted by the Mus-

lim looters. Night soil was littered over the steps of the temple not once but ten times in the beginning of the calendar year of 1990. Some Pandits staying back in the hamlet despite their status of hostages strongly protested against the desecration of the revered temple. They were terrorised and mercilessly beaten. One of them was said to have cried, "If the steps of a mosque were littered over with night-soil, you would have risen in revolt, cried that Islam was in danger and roasted Pandits alive."

11. Bhairav Nath Temple, Sopore

The temple was desecrated and damaged. The idols were broken and looted. The doors and windows of the temple have been looted and the walls around the temple levelled and the materials looted by the Islamic looters.

12. Khirbhawani Mandir, Ganderbal

The origins of the temple can be traced to epic times. It was subjected to a rocket attack on 4th April 1991 in which outer gate of the temple was severely damaged. It was again subjected to an attack on 4th of May, 1991. The outer structures still bear the bullet scars. According to B.G. Verghese the temple attracted attacks because of the presence of security forces guarding the temple. But he had not a word to say about hundreds of temples which were desecrated, damaged and destroyed by the Muslims and had no security forces to mount vigil on them.

13. Mattan Temple, Anantnag

A Muslim mob yelling in extreme fury and indignation entered the sacred premises of the temple and said Namaz and declared to the world that it was a Muslim shrine.

14. Gautam Nag Hermitage

The state administration replaced the CRPF personnel guarding the hermitage by the local armed police person-

nel who visibly harboured hate for the shrine and the Mahant looking after its management affairs. The Muslims targetted the hermitage and burnt most of the construction within its premises on 19th of October, 1990. The Mahant, Sukh Ram, had personally met the Home Minister who despite his promises to defend the shrine allowed the Muslim bigotry to take a toll of the sacred site of the Hindus.

15. Vilagam

There were three temples at Vilagam All the three are desecrated by the Muslim marauders. Walls enclosing the temples have been dismantled and materials looted. Idols have been either broken or removed.

16. Shoolara

The temple has been desecrated. The original idol has been removed from the sanctum sanctorum.

17. Gushi

The structure of the temple is standing, but there is no idol which has been broken or stolen by the Muslim bigots.

18. Kaloosa

The temple has been desecrated and its main idol broken or stolen.

19. Sadamalun

It is a hermitage with lots of land attached with it which are said to have been grabbed by the Muslims. The mahant was hacked to pieces.

20. Pattan ruins

The temples at Pattan which were ravaged and destroyed by the infamous Sikandar, the iconoclast, have been further devastated by the modern-day iconoclasts. That is how the ruins have dwarfed. The huge slabs that were still standing giving it the look of temples belonging to the hoary past have been removed and broken into heaps of pebbles.

21. Kanimoja Gantamulla

The huge stone held in great reverence at Gantamulla has been broken with hammers. Its half is missing and half is still standing. There were three hooves of the sacred cow at the same place and Kashmiri Pandits would throng the place on a particular day and date to have their "darshan". One hoof has been maliciously destroyed.

22. Hanumat Kund, Kupwara

The Hanumat Kund at the place of Halmatpora was a spring of oozing waters. It was held in reverence even by Muslims. Gujar Muslims are said to have desecrated the spring by offering it meat and since then it is said to have dried up and it has now been filled up with stones and boulders.

23. Raja Ram Mountains

These mountains lie between Tangadar and Teetwal. The idol of Ram has been desecrated, broken or looted.

24. Khoja Bagh Temple, Baramulla

It was a Shiva Temple and has been burnt.

25. Hanjivera Temple, Pattan, Baramulla

The Samadhi of an unknown saint within the temple premises has been demolished.

26. Venkara Temple, Baramulla

It has been burnt.

27. Palhalan Temple Baramulla

It stands burnt to ashes.

28. Bhairav Nath Temple, Baramulla

It had 10 kanals of land attached with it. It is burnt.

29. Ragnya Temple, Zainpora, Kulagam

The temple suffered the Muslim wrath when Mast Gul and his local Muslim collaborators burnt the chrar mausoleum of Nund Rishi. It was a temple after the pattern of Khsirbhawani Temple at Tulamulla. It was desecrated, looted and destroyed by the Muslim Vandals.

30. Brari-Angan Shrine, Anantnag

It has been a centre of pilgrimage for the Kashmiri Pandits since ages. It had an ancient temple made of wood with dhooni (holy fire) burning perennially. Even the Afghan tyrants could not put it out. But the modern day frenzied Muslims have desecrated and decimated the whole complex with impunity. Swami Swayamanand had built a new complex at the site after the pattern of Khsirbhawani Temple. The Dharmashallas with three storeys each have not been spared either. The assets of the temple have been looted by the Muslim vandals.

31. Kulavaghishwari Temple, Kulagam

It is located within the heart of the town. Its origins lie in the Mother Goddess worship tradition. It was looted, desecrated and burnt. Its fencing is removed and looted. Two Dharmshallas within the temple premises have been burnt.

32. Temples, Hanand Chawalgam

The Shiva Temple standing by the side of Boys High School was looted and burnt. The Ganesh Temple within the same premises was enclosed by a brick-wall which has been demolished and materials looted. The G.I.E. sheets covering the structures have been dismantled and looted. The whole area is ravaged and destroyed.

33. Manzgam Temple

It was a temple consecrated to the goddess Ragnya. The idol in the pond is desecrated and looted. The Dharamshalla with two storeys is completely gutted. The G.I.E. sheets are looted. The Dharmashalla was so capacious that it could accommodate 5,000 pilgrims at a time. The walnut trees and poplars growing within the tracts of land measuring 100 kanals have been felled and looted. Small wooden chowkies and huts have also been looted and burnt.

34. Temples, Mirhama

The Shiva Temple standing by the road-side is burnt. Another temple built by the Dogra Rajputs has also been set ablaze.

35. Temples Arrh

The temple standing opposite to the Boys High Schools, Arrh is burnt to ashes. Another Shiva Temple standing in the midst of the habitation has met the same fate. The foundations of another temple had been laid. The plinth that was laid out has been dug out and materials looted by the Islamic looters.

36. Temple Batsargam

It was a replica of the Kulavaghishwari Temple of Kulagam. The wall around the temple has been dismantled and materials looted. G.I.E. sheets are also looted. The two storeyed

Dharamshalla is burnt and destroyed. Chinars and walnut trees growing within the temple lands measuring 9-1/2 kanals have been felled and looted. The assets of the temple are also looted. The Muslim government of Krishna Rao proved shameless by sanctioning an ex-gratia grant of Rs. 3000/- which has been refused outright in view of the enormous losses suffered by the Kashmiri Pandits.

37. Katyayani Temple, Kulagam

It has been totally razed to the ground. The icons of Shiva, Parvati and Katyayani have been desecrated and broken into pieces. Dharmashalla is burnt. Materials of the temple are looted as booty. The fencing around the temple area measuring three kanals has been removed and destroyed.

38. Vaishakhi Temple, Kharbrari, Kulgam

It has a spring with ancient Shiva Lingas studding its sides. The trees and poplars growing within the temple have been felled and looted. The wall around the temple has been dismantled.

39. Temple, Bugam, Kulagam

It is completely burnt. Its shiva and Ganesh idols have been desecrated and destroyed. It is standing on the Maw Kuliya, a part of Vishoka (veshaw).

40. Temple, Dhanav, Bogund, Kulagam

It was the seat of Muslim loot of 1986. The temple which was looted and destroyed in 1986 was repaired and now has again been looted and burnt by the same brand of Muslim destroyers.

41. Temple, Wanpoh, Anantnag

The two Shiva Temples on the Nandi Kulya have been burnt and destroyed. They were destroyed in 1986 loot as well.

42. Temple, Ashmuji, Kulagam

The temple with an area of 3 kanals has been burnt.

43. Temple, Divasar

It is an ancient temple site. It is burnt and its assets have been looted by the insatiable looters.

44. Temple, Khanbarni, Kulagam

The temple owes its origins to ancient past. Its area spawns over 1-1/2 kilometres up into the forests. It is a replica of Khsirbhawani temple. It has been burnt to ashes. The pine trees considered sacred and worshipped have been felled and burnt. It is essentially known as the seat of Mother Goddess Tripursundary.

45. Nari Bharan Temple, Shopian

It was a small temple built after the tradition that was set by the Hindu rulers. The Muslims could not but burn it too.

46. Thakur Dwar Temple Shopian

It was standing on the shores of river Rambiarra. It was built by Rajputs with lots of investment. The Muslim arsonists burnt it with vengeance. A Dharmashalla for pilgrims was also burnt by sprinkling kerosene over it.

47. Kapalmochan Temple, Shopian

The Linga in the temple is desecrated and broken into pieces. The Dharamshalla meant for pilgrims has been burnt to ashes.

48. Kakren Temple

It was the biggest temple in the area built by a Dogra. It has 10 kanals of land attached with it. The temple is burnt and lands are

encroached upon. The assets of the temple have been looted by Islamic looters. The Shiva and Parvati idols are broken and desecrated.

49. Temple, Mahnoor, Badgam

It was desecrated and burnt.

50. Temple, Yechakoot, Badgam

It was a temple consecrated to the goddess Sharika. It was burnt alongwith chinars in and around the temple area.

51. Temple Shoolipora, Badgam

It was looted and burnt.

52. Temple Sangrampora, Badgam

It is the seat of the latest massacre of Kashmiri Pandits. The Shiva Temple within the hamlet was denuded of utensils, druggets and other assets long back. Planks worth 30,000 were looted from the temple premises.

53. Gangajattan, Badgam

The water flowing out at a fixed time and date from a particular spot known as Gangajattan is highly revered by Kashmiri Pandits. Thronging the place in large numbers they would have a purifying bath and take to meditation. It was stopped by the Shia-Muslims as it was fiated un-Islamic and hence as part of infidelity.

54. Shiva Temple, Rainawari, Srinagar

The Islamic marauders have dug the temple from inside and Linga is hurled out into the rubble. Paintings on walls have been erased and destroyed. The icon of Jagatamba (mother of

Universe) on a lion is broken into pieces. Two Dharmshallas are burnt and destroyed. Worship materials are looted. An FIR was lodged which was registered after great prevarication.

55. Ram Koul Temple, Hariparbat

The temple is damaged by Muslim vandals. Walls around the temple are dismantled and materials looted. Dharmashalla is burnt.

56. Ganesh Temple, Hariparbat

It is an ancient temple. Devotees having a parikrama of the Hillock commence their worship from this very temple. It has been desecrated, looted and burnt. The religious literature within the temple has been destroyed. Brutal attempts were made to damage the 'Shila' worshipped in great reverence.

57. Prayag Chinar, Shadipora

The Chinar at Prayag alongwith a small temple is destroyed with vengeance. The Pandits would immerse the ashes of their dead at this confluence.

58. 7 Temples, Rainawari, Srinagar

All the seven temple in the locality of Rainawari have been desecrated, looted and destroyed. The Dharamshallas within the temples have been burnt or damaged.

59. Vaital Bhairav, Dal Lake

The Shiva Temple in the premises of vaital Bhairav in the Dal Lake has been surrounded by public latrines built by Muslims who are sheer spiteful boors. The iron fencing of the temple is said to be damaged and removed.

60. Balak Pathshahi Temple, Srinagar

It was a small temple located near Food Control Department, J&K Government. The Idol of Shiva is desecrated and broken. The Srinagar Development Authority is said to have closed the gate of the temple by constructing a wall illegally on that side. The Supervisor appointed by the Dharamarth Trust was warned of dire consequences by the local Muslims if he entered the temple premises for inspection and assessment of losses.

61. Ram Temple, Khankhai Sokta, Safakadal, Srinagar

The idols of Ram and Sita are destroyed. A separate Shiva temple in the same complex has suffered the same fate. The Shiva Linga is hurled into the Jehlum. The Dharamshalla having two storeys is burnt to cinders.

62. Ropa Bhawani Asthapan, Khankhai Sokta, Srinagar

It is destroyed and burnt. The G.I.E. sheets are looted. The walls around the temple are dismantled and materials looted.

63. Temple, Purushyar, Srinagar

The temple situated on the shores of the Jehlum was ravaged and desecrated. The Dharamshalla was put afire by the Muslim arsonists.

64. Katleshwar Temple, Srinagar

There are no idols in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. The doors and windows of the temple are removed and looted. The walls of the temple have been scratched and razed. Shiva Linga thrown out of the temple is damaged. Chain is hanging and bell has been looted. All types of slang and obscenities are scribbled over the damaged walls of the temple. Dharamshalla is razed to the ground. Pandit houses around the temple premises are burnt and destroyed.

65. Raghu Nath Temple, Fateh Kadal, Srinagar

The structure of the temple has been pulled down. The idols studding the parikrama are missing. The idols of Ram, Sita and Hanuman are missing from the temple. Chain is hanging, but bell has been looted by the frenzied looters. The inner walls of the sanctum sanctorum are scratched. All sorts of dirt including shit is littered over the temple premises. All sorts of obscenities with genitals as the main theme are scribbled over the temple walls with charcoal. While going to the river-side there was a temple structure which has been destroyed. Steps leading to the main temple have been dug out.

The team of Kashmiri Pandits who paid a visit to the temple in the wake of the Sangrampora massacre was shocked to find obscenities of the worst brand scribbled over the temple walls.

66. Swami Gopi Nath Ashram, Kharyar, Srinagar The main gate of the ashram has been levelled. The dirt and rubble littered over the compound of the ashram is thrown inside it by the secular Muslims. The temple housing the Ganapati idol has been stoned and damaged. The trunk is chopped off. The main ashram is blocked by planks of wood after putting it to a bout of loot.

67. Temple, Payar

It is a piece of monument marking a specific development in the Hindu architecture. The same temple has been desecrated. The Muslim boors have built huge public latrines around it thus polluting the environs of the temple. The temple stones engraved with the figurines of Hindu deities are used as door-steps to denigrate the Hindu faith.

68. Temples, Malmoh, Badgam

The temples situated on the Nallah Ferozpore have been looted. The walls around them are demolished. Trees standing in their midst have been felled and looted. The icon of Ganapati in the

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temple of Bhagishwar Bhairav was broken allegedly by one Mohammad Ashraf S/o Abdul Aziz who was never caught and tried for the heinous crime.

69. Temple, Shalla Kadal, Kanikadal, Srinagar

The temple built by the family of Tickoos has been occupied by a Muslim and is said to have turned it into his residence. He has painted the whole temple structure green and has hurled the Shiva idol into a gutter.

70. Pokhribal Temple, Kathidarwaza, Srinagar

It is situated on the shores of the Nageen Lake. It has been savagely looted and plundered. The musical instruments within the Dharamshallas have been looted. The utensils, pots, pans and cups worth lakhs of rupees have been removed from the temple premises by the Islamic crusaders.. The Sikhs inhabiting the neighbourhood of the temple could not save the temple from the vandals.

11 LOOT AND BURNING OF BOOKS

Kashmir as a nursery of learning and religion has to its credit multi-dimensional and multi-faceted contributions to the mainstream culture and civilisation of India. There is no segment of human learning and abstract thought which intellectuals and thinkers of Kashmir have not nourished and enriched with loftiness of their thought and sublimity of their expression. The prolific faculties that they were endowed with have found remarkable expression in the annals of philosophy, aesthetics, poetics, sculpture and architecture and more than most in mathematics, astronomy and astrology. Kashmir as is universally recognised was a pivotal centre of sanskrit learning and erudition and as such had been a locus of attraction for a galaxy of scholars and savants with urges to satiate their thirst for knowledge and up-date their learning levels and scales. Kalhan, Jonraj, Srivar, Abhinavgupta, Somanand, Utpaldev, Somdev, Kshemendra *et al* transformed Kashmir into an intellectual centre of tremendous reputation through their scholarly attainments and this was how on the basis of trend-setting contributions to the total canvas of learning and scholarship Kashmir earned the honoured appellation of "Sharda Peeth", a hallowed centre of learning.

Islam tumbling like an avalanche upon Kashmir was ruthless in the destruction of "Sharda Peeth", its heritage, value-structure and usages. The Muslim anxiety religious in nature to destruct and root out the past of Kashmir (and as is well - known past lies buried in books) generated an unabated fury to tear, mutilate and burn the treasure-trove

of books that reflected like a mirror the 5000-year old cultural and civilisational history from the seminal promptings to the stages of full flowering. As the ruling cliques of Muslims sharing their ethos of intolerance, strife and disorder with their co-religionists inhabiting various regions and belts of territory were in pursuit of the malignant objective of genocide of Kashmiri Pandits, it would have remained an unfinished task of a set agenda had they not burnt their books on a stunning scale. As is amply testified by historical evidences the Buddhist, Shaivite and Vaishnavite places of worship littering over the land of Kashmir were not only cultural and religious symbols but receptacles of learning and centres of golden light of enlightenment dispelling mental obscurities and intellectual cobwebs through rare books and tomes orchestrating an ethos that surmounted the crude and un-seemly antagonism and strife generated in the name of religion. The destruction of books and libraries involved the same parameters of religious zeal and fanaticism with which destructive proselytisation was pursued and realised.

The genocide of Kashmiri Pandits owing its perception and motivation to the Sayyids was translated into actual praxis by Sikander, the book burner, who executed inter-alia the deliberate plan of destruction and decimation of Hindu knowledge and learning with the objective of promoting the Islamic brand of theology and learning with alien origins. As a psychopath with theo-fascist traits and proclivities he added new chapters to the Muslim history that is replete with instances of burning of books and libraries. The books as cultural objects dilating on Hindu learning, philosophy and theology were savagely fed to the kitchen fires and bath-room boilers of Sayyids who have been acclaimed as the harbingers of Islamic faith in Kashmir. The libraries which were set on fire with impunity went on burning and smouldering for months on end. Not only did the psychopath impose punitive levies and cesses on the Pandits but also destructed their faith and its reflec-

tions and explanations in books with the vicious objective of causing a hiatus in the history of culture and civilisation that the Pandits of Kashmir had actively shaped and were a heir to.

Records Srivar, "Sikander under the inspiration of yavanas (Muslims) burnt books, (saklan pustakan) the same way as fire burns hay."⁷²

Being an erudite scholar of Sanskrit Srivar has deliberately taken to the plank of wrong grammar to focus, stress and disseminate Sikander's heinous crime of destructing books on an unimaginable scale.

Again he records, "All the scintillating works faced destruction in the same manner that lotus flowers face with the onset of frosty winter."⁷³

As an inveterate enemy of human knowledge and learning Sikander replicated the Muslim history of burning libraries that were bedecked with precious books on all segments of human learning and creative impulses. The Kashmiri Pandits vexed and mortified at whole-sale despoliation of their precious heritage and cultural objects fled with a portion of their book-treasure to the mountainous regions and inaccessible forest areas where they could be safe and secure from the Muslim philistines. Some Pandits extra-keen to save their tomes and manuscripts from the Muslim destructionists crossed the mountain ramparts girding the valley to the plains of India.

Writes Srivar, "The erudites of that period witnessing the *enmasse* destruction of books by Muslims fled their land with some books through mountain routes."⁷⁴

Sikander harnessed state machinery to get the houses of Pandits ransacked and looted and the choicest books thus got were consigned to the flowing currents of rivers, oozing waters of lakes and wells and hurled into deep ditches and ravines.

Records Walter Lawrence, "All books of Hindu Learning which he (Sikander) could find were sunk in the Dal lake and after some time Sikander flattered himself that he had extirpated Hinduism from the valley." ⁷⁵

A Muslim historian Hassan also writes, "All the Hindu books of learning were collected and thrown into Dal Lake and were buried beneath stones and earth." ⁷⁶

On the total destruction of treasure-trove of books in the times of Muslim vandals led by Sikander, Jia Lal Kilam records, "Even in their miserable plight they (Pandits) did not forget their rich treasures which linked them with their past. They felt that they were custodians of their past cultural heritage-the illuminating treatises on the stupendous Shaiva philosophy and other great works on literature, art, music, grammar, and medicine-works which have excited the wonder of an admiring world and wherever they went they carried these treasures with themselves. Judging from the depth of thought displayed in these works that have been preserved, their high literary merit, their insight into the depth of nature, their poetical flights, their emotional fevour coupled with an incisive logical treatment of the subjects dealt with in them, one can easily imagine the colossal loss the world has been subjected to by the acts of vandalism which resulted in the destruction of hundreds of works which contained the labours of more than two thousand years." ⁷⁷

The destruction of books as leitmotifs of Hindu world-view, Hindu philosophical probes into supra-sensible realms, Hindu historiography, Hindu aesthetics did not diminish in its fury even in the comparatively peaceful times of Zain-ul-Abidin popularly known as Budshah. It is surprising that before his conversion to Shriya Bhat he is said to have constructed a cause-way from Naidkhai to Sopore with the temple stones and pillars along with invaluable stock of books that were looted from the temples, libraries and Pandit houses. He is the same king that reha-

bilitated the Pandits after their first forcible and massive exodus from their natural homes to unknown destinations.

The prolific and high calibre Kashmiri pandit scholars and intellectuals having scaled heights in creative thinking based on an all-embracing outlook and psychical diversity were reviled, humiliated and tortured to death. Bhuvaneshwar who had tremendous reputation all over the country for his amazing levels of scholarship in Vedic lore and learning was harassed and put to an orgy of plunder and loot (lotri-dand). Ultimately under motivations of infinite bigotry he was butchered in a merciless Muslim manner. His severed head smeared with tilak as a caste-mark was hurled away on a road-side with a view to instilling fear and trepidation among the intellectuals who had not renounced their religion and continued contributing to the indigenous expressions of learning and scholarship. All the Brahmans who were learned and had mastery over theology were exterminated. The fanatical intolerance and inveterate hatred that was exhibited against Hindu lore and learning and especially scholars irrigating them led to the demise of an ethos that had fostered plenitude and plenteousness of scholarship and learning.

Nona Dev, Jaya and Bhima Brahman with their depth of knowledge and breadth of vision were forced to commit suicide by leaping into the rivers. The Kashmiri pandit scholars who were highly venerated for their varied contributions to learning and aesthetics were subjected to the mutilation of body-parts and gruesome killings. Nirmal Kanth who had mobilised resistance against Muslim holocaust was physically eliminated not for encouraging apostasy but for his attainments in the annals of learning and scholarship. Men of letters were put to a whole-sale massacre and the books which they had authored were looted, torn and burnt.

Records Shuka, "Khwaja Mir Mohammad on the other hand induced Kak Chakra (Kaji Chak) who was alarmed at the work of Nirmal Kanth and others to give him per-

mission to act against them, and actuated by malice caused them to be killed."

Sukha again laments, "O Brahmans, where in this Kali Yug are your Brahmanical spirit and practice ? It was for want of these that the sorrowful and the affrighted Nirmal Kanth and others were killed. The oppression of the Mausalas (Muslims) which began in the times of Saidas (Sayyids) was perfected by Kaka Chakra (Kaji Chak)."⁷⁸

To push out Sanskrit from the Muslim courts and relegate it into an oblivion Persian was introduced and patronised by Muslims strutting the corridors of power. It was a big conspiracy to wean the Pandits away from Sanskrit language which had been the fountain-head of their lore and learning and was spoken even by women.⁷⁹ The position of Kashmir in the domain of Sanskrit was so pre-eminent that it came to be regarded not only as the abode of Goddess of Learning, Shardapecth, but also as the Sarvajnapith (abode of all forms of learning). Without being prolific on the significance of Sanskrit it can be said that Sanskrit is even now the foundation of the Kashmiri cultural heritage. Banishment of Sanskrit and its replacement by an alien language was an onslaught on the essence of Kashmiri identity. What would accrue from the language policy of the Muslim rulers was to deprive the Pandits of their sustenance by keeping them away from the administrative apparatus. But, to the shock and dismay of the fanatics, Kashmiri Pandits with an ardour for learning and scholarship took to the learning of Persian and made amazing and breath-taking contributions to the realms of Persian poesy and prose. But, Hazar Khan, the Pathan surrogate, did not take it lying down and issued orders banning the learning of Persian by the Pandits. If a Pandit flouted the fiat, he as always was straightaway to be butchered.

Comments Jia Lal Kilam, "The Pandits were strictly forbidden to read Persian and the penalty for the infringement was certain death. The degrading and unwholesome

consequences of this order can well be understood when we bear in mind that the Persian was then the court language and the affairs of the state were conducted in this language. It is a known fact that the Kashmiri pandits' mastery over the Persian language was second only to the Persians. The result was that they secured an entrance into the administration of the country. But Mir Hazar wanted them to be ousted for all time from the administrative machinery and this he could achieve with ease if no Persian knowing Pandit was available."⁸⁰

The fundamentalist forces in Kashmir that were in the processes of spreading their tentacles opened their agenda with the declaration of war on books that were not of Islamic brand and hue. Darwin was the first target as his Theory of Evolution does not conform to the Islamic tenets. The Jammaat-i-Islami as the rabid fundamentalist organisation launched a campaign to ransack libraries in the educational institutions and fiated ban on books which did not correspond to their fake knowledge about man, world and God. The Kashmir university funded by the University Grants Commission and headed by the Governor of the state was denuded of two thousand books including the works of Milton, G.B. Shaw, Shakespeare, H.G. Wells and tomes on Hindu Philosophy in a Nazi style. The book-shop vending works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Morris Cornforth, Winwood Read *et al* was looted in broad daylight at Batamaloo, Srinagar. The library of the Information Centre run by Government of India was looted by the progeny of Halaku Khan and set on fire. The book titled as "Pachan" authored by a Kashmiri literattuer was torn and burnt on the streets of Baramulla and the author was imprisoned for no fault of his for months on end. A Muslim progressive accused of heresy for having books of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mao *et al* was harassed by instituting cases against him and with the onset of Muslim terrorism he was cruelly squirted with bullets and killed.

As is well-known the Muslim insurgency backed up by the militarised Islamic forces opened its ruinous agenda in 1988 and touched a crescendo in 1989. The Muslim marauders could not but suppress their innate urge and proclivity to loot, plunder and arson the properties and estates left behind by the fleeing Pandits. They desecrated and destructed their temples, harvested their crops and annexed their lands and to cap it all looted and burnt their books as repositories of learning and knowledge. Targetting each Kashmiri Pandit house for loot and ravage as per the delineated plans the ruthless marauders acting in the name of Islam destroyed paintings in oils or in water colours and sketches of inestimable value and images of gods and goddesses and human figures sculpted out of bronze and other materials to quench their savage thirst for the annihilation of their religious foes. The Muslim destructionists chasing the grand plan of ethnic cleansing have been following to a dot the objective of uprooting and destructing the indigenous patterns of culture which are embedded and enshrined in books in the native language. Books in the words of Jean Paul Sartre are "Culture objects" replete with value-based conceptualisations about the inter-action that humanity in general had between itself and the surrounding milieu. Books are a sure key to self-discovery and also provide a safe corridor to the past. Books establish the continuity and coherence of a civilisation. As the Muslim revanchists in their designs are out to destroy the community of Pandits, numerically a minority, they are destroying their books to give a hiatus to their 5000-year old cultural and civilisational process and also break their un-interrupted tryst with the goddess of learning. There is much of pith in the statement "If you want to destroy a community, burn its books."

Man can beget sons but he cannot beget books. As a commonsense stuff it can be understood that a man impelled by his natural instincts and drives can procreate but he is absolutely incapable of procreating a book symbolis-

ing his culture as an accumulated store-house of values, traditions, customs and mental patterns. A book invests a man with self-articulation. It gives him a definition and invests him with a high sense of pride. The Muslim marauders with five hundred years of history in Kashmir have been chasing Islamisation with a view to rendering the Kashmiri pandits as "Cultural destitutes" by destroying their "Cultural autonomy" which they presume is the prelude to their deculturation, assimilation and final decimation without any resistance. With the motive of destroying sanskrit learning and its vestiges in kashmir the invaluable treasure of Sanskrit manuscripts in Sharda script that was preserved in the Research Library, Srinagar was shifted to the Department of Central Asian Studies where it is said to have been dumped in gunny bags left to the care of hostile moths. The manuscripts are a veritable treasure-trove dilating on mind-body disciplines, recondite philosophical doctrines, arcane fortune telling systems, integrated theoretical systems from aesthetics to rhetoric and complexities of language nuances.

The books looted from Pandit clusters prior to their total decimation have been contemptuously torn, mutilated and scattered over the interiors of the houses. There are marauders who have collected numerous books on varied subjects, and have been selling them by weight. There is a special class of Muslim marauders who have dumped a huge stock of invaluable books in their residential quarters and have been selling them to retailers who in turn tear them page by page and convert them into cones and other geometrical shapes to vend off their retail items like tea, sugar, salt, spices et al. There are Muslim fanatics of the Jammaat-i-Islami breed who make a pile of the looted books in the isolated corner of a lane and set it afire chanting "death to Pandit Kafirs." A few more cunning among them harness the services of Kashmiri Pandit hostages staying back in the valley and despatch them to Jammu and other metropolises to mobilise the sale of old manuscripts

in Sharda script at a lucrative price. The horoscopes looted from Kashmiri Pandit houses are also a saleable item with the looters.

An officer in the state government, a literattuer by all standards, at the time of "office move" from Jammu to Srinagar way back in 1992, was shocked and dismayed to learn about the sale of the looted books at a particular shop in a down-town locality. Camouflaging his real identity he made a foray into the Muslim den and succeeded in locating the shop. While accosting to the Muslim shop-keeper putting on a well-cut beard he was plainly informed that he had been selling books looted from the houses of Pandit Kafirs who had fled the land thus rendering a damage to the on-going movement. On enquiry he was told that he himself had been looting books from the Pandit houses and then he had contacts who have been pursuing it as a profession at the behest of respectable Muslims. "Who are the persons at whose behest they pursue it as a profession?" asked the officer. "That I cannot tell", was the reply. Ultimately the officer was led into the interior of the shop where he purchased 5 kgs of books for fifty rupees. When back home he was surprised and vexed to find that the books he had purchased included Stein's Rajtarangini and two volumes of Nilmat Puran. On perusal he discovered that all the books he had fetched home bore the signatures of the Pandits who had purchased them with the moneys that they had earned with the sweat of their brow. For the officer it was a shock, but for the Muslim looter it was a religious act as he was vending off booty legitimised by the Textual injunctions.

Amritsar as sources say has emerged very lately as the active disposal market of loot from the Kashmiri Pandit houses. Old hand-written manuscripts in Sharda studded with miniature paintings on their margins and books on varied segments of human learning are said to be openly being marketed. One such looted manuscript has been acquired by an Institute pursuing research in the culture of

Kashmir at Delhi. Gangs of cloth and textile peddlers mostly from the Punjab and Delhi have been thronging the city of Srinagar and have been operating as conduits for the disposal of knowledge and culture looted from the Kashmiri Pandits houses.

There is a definite and pin-pointed information about some Muslims who have piled up incredible stocks of looted books and manuscripts and other antiques in their houses and have been desperately searching for touts throughout the country to dispose of their booty for hefty sums. Some such touts have already made their presence felt in Jammu. People interested in the history of Kashmir are fully aware of the fact that a cause-way in the Anchar Lake was built with the books of Hindu lore and learning, but they will have to up-date their knowledge by the Muslim act of setting up a business in the area of looted books and manuscripts.

The Muslim insurgents with religious motivations have ethnically cleansed Kashmir of its original natives and there is a consistent drive to destroy their cultural and religious heritage thereby robbing them of the characteristics of a religious minority with a deep-seated consciousness of its distinctive identity. Books as a vehicle and source of heritage have been under the Muslim on-slaught and this is what prompted the author to probe the grievous losses by way of books that the Kashmiri Pandits have suffered. Ten prominent Kashmiri pandit artists, twenty professors, thirty-five teachers, ten political workers of long standing and eighteen farmers were contacted and their book losses recorded. Some cases are highlighted to focus on the cultural genocide of the Kashmiri Pandits in their native land which political mayopics still consider a tranquil secular oasis.

P.N. Kachru an Artist

P. N. Kachru is a graduate from the Punjab University. He kept terms in Post-graduation in English Literature, 1945-

46, in the same university. He earned a Diploma in Fine Arts (Painting) in 1944. He has been the founder member of the National Cultural Front established in November, 1947 to combat the tribal storm-troopers who invaded Kashmir in October, 1947. He has also been the founder member of Progressive Artists Association, The National Cultural Congress, J&K State Cultural Congress, the J&K Artists Association and the visionaries. He has held numerous exhibitions of his paintings at various art centres in Delhi, Bombay, Lucknow and Srinagar. He has also participated in numerous national exhibitions held by Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, Hyderabad Art Society, Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta, Bombay Art Society et al.

He shot up in the art scenario of the country when he earned a number of awards from Hyderabad Art Society and Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, J&K State. In 1988 he was invested with "the Veteran Artists" Award by AIFACS, New Delhi.

Kachru had no fewer than four thousand books which have been looted by the Islamic looters. In fact, his house was the first to be looted when the loot, plunder and arson of pandit houses gained the fury of a campaign. The looters were gaga with the enormous booty that they got from the house. His writings and his treasure of paintings as his life-time achievements have also been looted. The losses are inestimable not only to the person of Kachru but to the entire cultural history of India.

The books he had and stand looted are as under:-

- a) A rare collection of Agama Tantras of Kashmir
- b) Books on Kashmir Philosophy of Shaivism
- c) Books on Kashmir History (Kalhan to modern)
- d) General History including Toyenbee
- e) Books (rare) on Kashmir Buddhism
- f) Books on the Indian and European Philosophies
- g) Valuable fabulous volume (illustrated) publication of Time-

Life series on: Mathematics, space-time, Astronomy, Space Research and Discovery

- h) Encyclopaedia of World Art (running in volumes)
- i) Fabulous books on art movements like Gandhara, Mathura, Gupta, Byzantine, Renaissance, Impressionist and Post - Impressionist Art.
- j) Volumes by and on Sartre, Heidegger, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche
- k) Volumes on English Literature
- l) numerous collected research documents and Indian medieval Paintings.

Trilok, Koul, an artist

Trilok Koul is a graduate from the Punjab University. He kept terms in Post-graduation in Mathematics, 1944-45, in the same university. His artistic impulses led him to Baroda for the systematic training as an artist and he stayed there for nearly five years and earned a degree in Fine Arts. He has been the founder member of the Progressive Artists Association and Kashmir Artists Association and numerous other organisations which he has not been able to name as all his relevant records and documents which he had with him when back at home but now have been looted by the Islamic looters. Along with Santosh and Kachru he has been the life-breath of the art movement in Kashmir about which Herman Goetz remarked, "It seems to be bridging the gulf of 600 artless years of Kashmir". He has also been a founder of the Baroda Art Group alongwith the well-reputed artists like Bendre, Shanti Dave, Jyot Bhat and Ghulam Rasool Santosh. When asked about the losses he has suffered by way of loss of his books and paintings, he made a telling reply, "As if I was not born at all. As if I have done nothing in my life. I have not lived and struggled. I was not educated at all and I never painted. I have no family and no background." He felt very much vexed about the loss of his painting "How Green was my Valley" signifying a land-mark in his career as an artist.

Trilok Koul is a name in Indian painting and has held numerous exhibitions at Delhi, Bombay, Hyderabad, Calcutta *et al.* He is known for his commitment to art. He has earned multiple awards establishing his distinction as an artist from the Bombay Art Society, All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, Academy of Arts Amritsar and numerous First Prizes from the Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, J&K State, *et al.* Very lately he has been honoured with "Sharda Saman" instituted by the Panun Kashmir Organisation.

Paintings lost or looted

- a) All art works of personal collection numbering one hundred and fifty (mostly oil paintings on canvas)
- b) Paintings three in number purchased from Jatin Das
- c) Pen-portrait of Koul drawn by Jatin Das
- d) A portrait of Koul's sister delineated by S.H.Raza in 1948
- e) Paintings gifted to him by Kachru, Santosh, S.N.Bhat (Late), Kishori Koul.
- f) A painting gifted to him by Solegoankar.
- g) A painting purchased from S.N.Bhat when he was at the peak of his creativity.

Koul had thousands of books on varied subjects. The principal authors who were on his shelves were:-

1. A. Huxley 2. Voltaire 3. Aristotle 4. Chellani 5. Homer 6. Shakespeare 7. Plato 8. Bacon 9. Neitschze 10. Boswell 11. Darwin 12. Franz Kafka 13. Books on Picasso 14. The Book of Art (Vol.9 is saved from the cruel marauderes) 15. K.C.Pandey, an expert on Indian aesthetics 16. Bharat as the author of Natyasastra

Dr. Kashi Nath Pandita, a Scholar

Dr. Kashi Nath Pandita is a known scholar of Perisan. He retired as the Director of Central Asian Studies, University

of Kashmir. He has authored a number of books. During debasing exile he has highlighted the human rights violations of Kashmiri pandits at various national and international fora. In this connection he has toured nearly fifty countries crusading for the restoration of home-land to the Pandits that the Muslim fundamentalists have robbed them of. The losses that he has suffered by way of books are described by him as under:-

“As a scholar and lover of Persian Literature I considered myself very fortunate to have got an opportunity at an early stage of my career to study at the highest Institute in Iran, the University of Tehran (1959-62). During my four years stay I saved each penny to purchase valuable books. On my return (I came by a ship) I carried back 5 big wooden containers filled with books.

These were all printed works of immense value-classics. In all these numbered 2500 big and small works.

Prior to that and after that I went on adding to my fund till my exile in 1989-90. I had collected nearly 120 manuscripts in Persian including about 60 manuscripts I had inherited from my ancestors. These included rare specimens of Persian calligraphy like illustrated Shahnama, Diwan of Hafiz, illustrated Rubai's of Khayyam. I had obtained other rare printed books like Persian-French Dictionary in 5 volumes, literary history of Persia in 4 volumes, Persian Dictionary in 4 volumes and a large number of works on Iranian history and civilisation. In particular the fund contained books on Zoroastrianism, Avest and Pahalvi which were my special study in the domain of linguistics.

My father had also nearly 300 books on history, Geography and general knowledge which had come to me as a bequest.

Then there were volumes of class lecture notes of immense value.

All this fund has been taken away and perhaps destroyed as the entire house has been destroyed and turned into a public latrine in my absence on exile."

Dr. Vishva Nath Drabu

Dr. Vishva Nath Drabu graduated from the Punjab University and took his masters Degree in History from the same university. He is a Ph. D from Banaras Hindu University. He started his teaching career as a lecturer of History in D.A.V. College, Hoshiarpur and later joined the Govt. Degree College, Baramulla in 1963 as Professor of History. His book "Kashmir Polity" is his doctoral thesis which won him the Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy Award in 1988. He has earned acclaim as a scholar of depth and understanding through the research papers which have been published in various research journals of the country. He has worked on the Lok Prakasa of Ksemendra which has been listed for publication by the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. His stupendous work "Saivagamas" has won him accolades from intellectual circles in the country. He is at present working on the Art and Archaeology of Kashmir.

Dr. Drabu when pushed out of Kashmir under a Muslim fundamentalist conspiracy started living in a camp at Muthi in Jammu. He has lost everything by way of material goods. He had one thousand books which he had purchased from his meagre incomes as a professor. Some valuable books he has lost are as under:-

- a) Books on Ancient Indian History and Culture
- b) Books on general History of India from medieval period to modern times.
- c) Books on Political Science which included Lasky and Sabine
- d) A rare collection of Kashmir Shaivagamas
- e) All Rajtaranginis from Kalhan to Shuka
- f) a rare collection of art books which included a) Gupta Art by Harley b) Gupta Art by Jonathan

- Williams c) Gandhara Art in Pakistan by Ingolt
 d) History of Indian Art by Hutchinson e) Art in
 Central Asia by Rowlinson
 g) He had procured a catalogue of Pehsawar Museum
 from Dacca in Bangladesh
 h) Bronzes of Kashmir by P.Paul
 b) Art and Architecture of Kashmir by P.Paul
 c) Ancient Monuments of Kashmir by R.C.Kak
 d) Early Sculpture of Art of Kashmir By Paul
 e) A Handbook of Sri Partap Museum by R.C.Kak
 i) His daughter, a medical doctor, had more than one
 hundred books on various topics of medical science
 which also have been looted.

Pandit Dina Nath Muju

"I have lived my life. What even if they kill me and what will they gain by killing me ?" These are the words of a saintly son of Saraswati, Pt. Dina Nath Muju, who was robbed of his life at mid-night by the Muslim killers. Was this eighty-year old man really a threat to their plans of establishing an Islamic state? The day he was ruthlessly killed the Pakistan media blared out that a patron of Indian informers was exterminated. And the progeny of so-called Rishis believed in what was drummed into their ears.

Pandit Dina Nath was a real pandit. He would be busy reading and writing with his back erect till late in the mid-night. His study stacked and stuffed with books on variegated branches of learning, from history to philosophy, from J. Krishnamurti to Vivekanand, from Socrates to Democritus conveyed all about the man. He has written innumerable articles which are mostly un-published and his son, Dr. G.K. Muju, is collecting them to give them a book form. He had a distinct style of his own and his exposition was lucid and expressive. His essay on "Spanda" (what it means) has won him acclaim from the American scholars working on Kashmir Shaivism. "Shine ever more Brightly" is his essay which he starts, "Today all of us have electric

light in our houses. The light in our room shines through a bulb. If there is no bulb, there is no light and the light cannot shine without the bulb. But the bulb itself cannot give us the light. There must be current of light flowing into it.....”

Pt. Dina Nath Muju had nearly five thousand books which the Muslim looters have looted. His treasure of books included

- a) valuable manuscripts in Sharda(pothies)
- b) all works and lectures of J. Krishnamurti
- c) all studies on J. Krishnamurti
- d) “Song of Life” as a rare collection of poems by J. Krishnamurti
- e) complete file of “Theosophist”
- f) Theosophist literature
- g) nearly two dozen old Kashmiri Paintings
- h) All works on Kashmir Shaivism from Vasugupta to Abhinavagupta
- i) All studies on Kashmir Shaivism
- j) rare works on Indian Philosophy especially vendanta
- k) His own writings on various topics are lost
- l) A 200-paged book “Kashmiri Language and Grammar” in Devnagri script was authored by him and was ready for publication. If it is retrieved or was looted as booty is yet to be confirmed.

Pt. Anand Ji Razdan

Pandit Anand Ji Razdan of chowgam was a saintly person. A reputed saint, Divakak Ji, lived at his place for a considerable period of time. It was at his initiation that Anand Ji chose and vowed to be a celibate. He would spend most of his time in worship and finally took to meditation. His fame as a saint spread through most of the villages wherefrom devotees would throng his house for blessings. He was in close contact with Gasha Kak Ji and Sarwanand Ji who were acknowledged as reputed saints with achievements in mystical realms.

Pandit Anand Ji had lots of books, mostly devotional in contents, which he had stuffed in fifteen wooden boxes. He had some original manuscripts on Kashmiri Shaiva saints including Siddha Sri Kanth who was the celebrated preceptor of Lal Ded, the mystical lark of Kashmir. He was a poet and wrote religious hymns. Some of them were printed also and were made available to his devotees. He in his ecstasy would sing the hymns he himself had written.

All his poems, books and manuscripts are looted by the Muslim looters.

Kanya Lal Pandita-a lawyer

Kanya Lal Pandita is law graduate from the University of Kashmir. He has been a practising lawyer and in the wake of Muslim terrorism he like majority of his co-religionists fled his native land to a secure zone in Jammu. He owned three houses which have been burnt by the Muslim arsonists. He had a well-equipped library of law-books and reporters which catered to his requirements as a practitioner of law. The books that he had gone in for with his hard earned money were either looted or fed to the fire. With the grievous loss of his books he felt crippled as a lawyer and had to refurbish his library with new tomes. The losses he has suffered are:-

- a) All India Reporter 1950 (12parts)
- b) All India Reporter 1951 (full set)
- c) All India Reporter (full sets) 1952 to 1961
- d) Civil Procedure Code (3 Vols)
- e) All India Service Reporter (1950 to 1989)
- f) Service Law
- g) Law of Writs
- h) Chandigarh Law Reporter (1970 to 1989)
- i) Mitra Limitation Act
- j) Medical Jurisprudence
- k) Six versions of Quran in English gifted to him by a Muslim separatist, now abroad, namely Mohammad Ayub Thakur

- l) Kashmiri Version of Bhagavatgita written by Pt. Tara Chand, a scholarly person
- m) History of Kashmiri Pandits after 1947 in manuscript form written by Prakash Ram Pandita
- n) Bible and Guru Granth Sahib

Prof. M.L. Kokiloo

Prof. M.L. Kokiloo is a scholar of Sanskrit and an expert on Kashmir Shaivism. He has personal achievements both in the fields of learning and spirituality. He belongs to the legendary family of Kokiloos who have made positive contributions to the culture and tradition of Kashmiri pandits. His house at Banamohalla is burnt by Muslim marauders. He had nearly three thousand books including some rare manuscripts of immense cultural value which have been looted and burnt. He regrets the loss of a book "Shiva-ratri Puja Padati" which dilated on the worship of lord Shiva on the festival of Shiva-ratri. He equally mourns the loss of "Jwala Puja Padati" which as a manuscript was written by an unmarried daughter of the family with a deep spiritual bent. The Kokiloos have been an epi-centre of the Kashmiri pandit learning and scholarship. An ancestor of the family has authored a work on Sanskrit grammar which even Stein has made a mention of. He possessed rare manuscripts of the works of Kashmir Shaivism and all versions of Rajtaranginis.

Badri Nath Nissar

Badri Nath Nissar is a reputed poet, author and journalist. He is the president of All India Sahitaya Sadan (Regd) J&K, Gehwara-e-Adab (Regd) Haryana and "Sapan Mala" Memorial Committee, Jammu. He is the patron of Panjabi Adbi Sangam (Regd), J&K and Farawani-e-Adab, Hissar, Haryana. He is also the life-member of Bazm-i-Bekhud (Regd) Delhi and Kashmiri Pandit Sabha (Regd) Jammu. He is the editor of the Kashyapvani, Jammu.

About the books which he has lost and valued them more than gold he writes:-

"A portion of collection of books, besides my own authored ones, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, Arabic and Panjabi, was learnt to have been looted and burnt in Srinagar from my ancestral house at Purushayar, Habbakadal, II Bridge much before our house was set ablaze on 11.6.1996 by the Kashmiri fundamentalists, extremists and Muslim neighbours. Some detail of books is as under:-

Kumar Sambhava by Kalidas

Malvikagni-mitra by Kalidas

Bhagvatgeeta with Urdu translation in verse and explanation Ganesh Stotra (75-year old)

Bhawani Sahastranam with Hindu/Urdu translation and "Namavali" - (100 year old)

Bible, an old manuscript in English

Zaboora (Urdu)

Yuhana Ki Anjeel (Urdu)

Quran (3 Nos)-(different sizes and shades)

Quran-i-Hakeem 16"x12" (Brail)

Amrit Varsha (4 series) Hindi

Shakuntala by Kalidas

Satyarth Prakash (Hindi)

Galib Panjabi Libas Vich (Panjabi)

Tarian Bhare Angarey (Panjabi)

Farhang-i-Amra (70 year old)

Farhang-i-Amra (Jadeed)

Karim-ul-Lughat

Feroz-ul-Lughat

Jehangiri Farhang

Hindi-Urdu-English Dictionary (4 Nos)

Poetry and Prose-Self Publications

Aijaz-i-Islam, Guldestani-i-Islam

Sukhan wari, Asasa, Ashkbari
 Mukhzan-i-Asrar-i-Nav (Prose)
 Dakhli-i-Maikada (do)
 Kitabat (-do-)
 Khatoot-ki-Baat(-do-)

Other Collections

Rum Jum Kul Kul Masnavi Zahar-i-Ishk
Sheereen Khusroo Masnavi Khanjar-i-Ishk
Makhzan-i-Asrar Masnavi Qatil-i-Ishk
 Masnavi Gulzari Naseen (*Majaz Licknavi*)
Aabi Hayat (Mohd Hussain Azad)
Dewan-i-Munawar (Pt. Bisheshwar Prasad)
Amar Nath Ji Ki Yatra (Pt. D.N.Warikoo)
Constitution of India, Indian Penal Code
Constitution of J&K, Ranbir Penal Code
Khaleefa Hoon Main Galib Ka (Hialal Chugatai)
Abr-i-Rehamat (Hilal Ahmad Zuberi)

There could be more books, besides Dharmic literature. I had packed all the books in 4 boxes for their transfer to Jammu in the wake of a new house that I built in Jammu. But soon Kashmir was engulfed in terrorist fires and I could never return to my land to retrieve my books which loss has rendered me an orphan and destitute in the field of literature.

C.L. Chrangoo

Chaman Lal Chrangoo is a retired principal of a Higher Secondary School. He is a post-graduate in Economics and is known for his progressive views on politics and national reconstruction. He in collaboration with a journalist yet on the threshold of his career conducted a survey on the rise and growth of Jamaat-i-Islami in Kashmir which was well appreciated by the circles that had organised the survey. He was a lover of books and continues to be so despite

economic hardship and indigence. On the losses that he suffered by way of books he puts as under :-

“The so-called Jihad of Muslim fundamentalists in full cry in Kashmir smacks of barbarity, communal frenzy, scant consideration for civilised demeanour and above all disgust for realms of gold. They have made bold to exhibit their contempt for learning and knowledge beyond the ambit of Quranic revelations. Motivated by the same creed of hatred of varied forms of knowledge other than Islamic they went whole-hog in torching of books enshrining indigenous form of knowledge. It is nothing but fanatic madness.

Kashmir as a seminary of knowledge and literary expressions has given to the world a treasure-trove of books which can be treasured by people of any faith but the Muslims. It is apt to put that books have not been destroyed and decimated now but Muslims have a history of destroying books either by putting them to fire or hurling them into the lake waters or burying them underground. It was done to uproot the indigenous culture forms to promote an alien, a foster culture form that these days is given currency as “Kashmiriyat”.

I had a collection of five hundred books that I had gone in for from my hard earned incomes from time to time. As a precious prized treasure I valued it more than anything else. The collection had books on History like Toynbee's 5 volumes, H.G. Well's World History, Majumdar's Ancient History of India, V.P. Menon's Integration of India States, Nehru's Discovery of India, Stein's Rajtarangini, and J.C.Dutt's four Rajtaranginis. It also included books on Economics which was my subject in post-graduation. Piago, Mill, Reicardo, Marshall, Malthus, Schumpeter as names in the domain of economic theorisations urged me to buy books on the subject by the Indian authors as well.

On the side of literature Hardy, Dickens, Wordsworth, Dostoveisky, Tolstoy, Shakespeare and modern-day essay-

ists and playwrights filled the shelves and lent a new meaning to my life.

I also had a good number of books authored by progressive and Marxist scholars and theoreticians. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Dange, Maurice Cornforth, Rajni Palme Dutt, D.D. Kalusambi, and others shaped my views on broad matters of politics. Among modern day sociologists and philosophers I had a prized collection of Eric Fromme and trilogy of Alvin Toffler. I also possessed the Bagvatgita translated and commented upon by Dr. Radha Krishnan and Pickthal's Quran.

And it was a great shock to me when I heard that all the books except one were thrown out of a dis-shaped hole where once stood a window and its fixture and collected in one heap on one side of the compound of my house and a bonfire made of them all by sprinkling of kerosine oil. Halaku had done the same."

Radha Krishen Sher

R. K. Sher graduated from the Panjab University in 1942. He joined the government service as a "peshi clerk" in the year 1944. He retired as an office superintendent when his juniors who were Muslims retired as commissioner-cum-secretaries, Additional secretaries or Deputy Commissioners. R.K. Sher is forthright in blaming the governments that came to power after 1947 which consistently pursued communal policies with a view to edging out Kashmiri Pandits. He was superseded fifty-three times with the result he could not scale the ladder of promotions which his Junior Muslims could with governments pursuing communal discrimination. After exodus R.K. Sher is a house-hold name as he has been hoghlighting the fate of Kashmiri pandits in exile and also fighting disinformation that has been unleashed against the community. There is hardly a day when a letter from Sher does not appear in the local and national press.

R.K. Sher is a voracious reader. He had his own collection of books which he had purchased from his meagre incomes. The losses that he has suffered alongwith the experiences of terrorism engulfing Kashmir are put by him as under:-

“Destiny having always leered at me, I was perpetually deep in troubled waters particularly during the ten years of the Sultanate of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. The then Chief Secretary to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Shoonthu (Ammu Shunth in Kashmiri parlance) was the most incompetent officer holding such a vital position. He was ridden with arrogance and fits of hypocrisy blended with communal persuasions in consequence whereof many Kashmiri Hindus particularly myself were main target of his craze and vanity. My straightforward bent of mind did not suit his style of functioning resulting in my getting superseded so blatantly that I lost the very taste and purpose of life in the prime of my life.

Be that as it may, I did not care as much for such an inhuman treatment for the fact that I looked at it as perversion of luck which as a staunch Hindu I believed in, as I felt dazed and rather bewildered at the incidence of terrorism in my lovable homeland, where I had settled permanently after serving the State Government for 32 years. My newly raised small dwelling at Rawalpura quite opposite to the High School on the other side of the road received a terrible innuendo that some-thing unusual was in the offing. It was 7.55 AM my sleep which is usually sweet in the morning was disturbed by gun-shots. It was January 25, 1990. I left the bed-room shell-shocked and saw people gathered around the dead bodies of four Air Force men on the road. Incidentally an army truck passed by and lifted the bodies. I feel that instead of lifting the dead bodies so quickly, had these army men given a chase to the killers they could have caught hold of them. On my return I went to the toilet where I felt that somebody was hiding at the

hind side of my house. Had I opened the rear door of the toilet the killer youth might have forced his entry into my house at gun point. But fortunately I did not do so and the killer crossed over my compound wall and saw himself in the fore-ground of Mr. Koul, my neighbour, opened Koul's gate and reached a byelane and disappeared from the public view. It was the first shot that terrorists had attempted to usher in Nizam-e-Mustafa in the once Hindu dominated Kashmir.

Though the job of killing unsuspecting human beings was the most heinous in the present civilised world, one feels that these terrorists deserve a word of praise for keeping their designs close to their chest. Not a wink of impending disaster could be perceived by the whole community. Once a neighbour asked my wife as to why she did not go to Jammu as usual. The poor illiterate woman could not smell a rat in the suggestion of Manzoor Ahmad. When things surpassed our imagination and my brother from Jammu pressed me to leave the valley I resisted because I had built a small dwelling after having lived 32 years of my life as a nomad.

After my retirement my delightful hobby was to write extensively about the wrongs done to the community during Bakshi's Sultanate though there were many who prospered through his favours. With a view to supplementing my writing abilities I ventured to purchase about five hundred books out of my meagre pensionary emoluments on subjects like History, politics and spiritualism. The Bhagvatgita, the Quran, the Bible and the Granth Sahib were the first books I went in for. Late Lala Durga Dass's compiled letters of Sardar Patel and Churchill's volumes on Second World War also adored my tiny but beautiful library. When I would be in my study with books near me and books on the shelves to look at, I felt that I had all the riches and wealth of the world. I have no agony on account of the loss of my movable property but I feel terribly cheated by Providence which did not allow me a chance to

bundle these books alongwith me to lend me support and succour in my prolonged exile. It is the greatest misfortune that could have befallen me. I sadly learn that many of these books have been torn into pieces and many are sold as scrap. The Muslim looters did not only rob us of what we had by way of material goods but they robbed us of books which are the objects of culture and value systems."

Hriday Nath Vishan

H.N. Vishan is a retired lecturer in History. He served the State Department of Education for nearly thirty-six years with zeal and dedication. History was his special subject. He had collected lot many books with savings from his petty incomes. About his losses by way of books he puts as under :-

"I owe inheritance to a family that was dedicated to Education Department with the exception of my father who had found a job in the Revenue Department. My uncle known as Master Sudhershnan Vishan was a contemporary of two famous teacher-scholars, Pt. Zinda Koul and Pt. Shanker Pandit. He worked as a teacher in the Mission School established by Tyndal Biscoe way back in 1888. He was a complete man with high and lofty ideals. A trained graduate of those days he had earned tremendous reputation not only as a teacher but also as a voracious reader. Unfortunately he died prematurely and that was the reason he could not hold the same status in the scholarly circles as Master Jee and Shanker Pandit held. It was my uncle who inspired me to read books and collect books. As I had a special taste for history I took to reading books on history. I joined the Department of Education as a teacher in 1956 and whatever savings I had, I would go in for books that met my intellectual and spiritual yearnings.

I had collected a small library of six hundred books on different subjects. This habit of mine continued with me till I was forced to abandon my sweet home as a result of militarised Islam. The fate of my house at Banamohalla

cannot be in any way different from the houses of my co-religionists. It is looted, plundered and nearly destroyed. The books as I learn have been looted, burnt and some sold to retailers as scrap. Those who could burn the library in Alexandria could not spare my tiny collection of books.

The books I had included the following:-

1. Great Men of India.
2. Nehru-the Lotus Eater of Kashmir by D.F. Kraka
3. Daughters of vitasta by P.N. Bazaz
4. My years with Nehru by B.M. Malik
5. A Study of Nehru by Rafique Zakaria
6. Neta Ji Subash Chander Bose by Chaman Lal Bazaz
7. Curzon to Nehru by Druga Dass
8. Mission to Lahsa by Younghusband
9. Sardar Patel correspondence Vol I to X by Durga Dass
10. Gulab Singh-the founder of J&K State by K.M. Panikar
11. Raj Tarangini-Vol. I, II, III by M.A. Stein
12. Rajtarangini by Ranjit Pandit
13. Birds of Kashmir by Ruthbrook
14. The History of Kashmiri Pandit by Jia Lal Kilam,
15. A History of Kashmir by P.N. Bazaz
16. Roses in December by M.C. Chagla
17. Ancient Monuments of Kashmir by R.C. Kak
18. Valley of Kashmir by Walter Lawrence
19. Aurangzeb and His Times (2 Vols) by J.N. Sarkar
20. Integration of Indian States by V.P.S. Menon

Dr.S.L. Kachru

Dr. S.L. Kachru is a post-graduate in surgery. His efficiency and calibre as a surgeon was thoroughly known to the people of Anantnag where he was posted in the District Hospital. As Muslim terrorism was fast gaining momentum there were massive anti-India and anti-Kashmiri Pandit demonstrations throughout the district. In one such demonstration Ghulam Mohammad Shah, old and ailing,

also participated and among others he was arrested and detained in the police station where he breathed his last. The dead body was sent to the District Hospital for post-mortem and Dr. Kachru on duty declared the death as natural. The issuance of such a certificate by the expert doctor triggered the wrath of Muslim insurgents and threatening letters started pouring in to the address of the doctor.

A threatening letter in Urdu dated. 30.10.1989 signed by the commander of JKLF, Pulwama reads as under:-

“Doctor. Through your sinful act you have not only hurt our sentiments but posed a challenge to our prowess and through it you have invited your death. You have no right to serve on such a post. Resign your post within 15 days failing which you will meet the fate of the police officer of Wagura.”

It was followed by a report in the “Alsafa” date-lined 29 Nov., 1989 with the screeching head-lines:-

“The Doctor issuing fraudulent Death Certificate absconding. His abandoned car recovered from Noorpora, Tral.”

The rest of the news item reads-

“It is reliably learnt that a surgeon specialist has been absconding for some days. According to K.N.B, the doctor had declared the death of Ghulam Mohammad Shah, F/o Shabir Ahmad Shah as natural though the deceased had fallen a prey to police excesses. After the happening the doctor had started receiving threatening letters accusing him of mis-using his position just to earn favours from the government. In view of threats to his life he had managed his transfer to Pulwama and was running his private practice at Awantipora. But now he has been absconding for some days. As per available information his abandoned car was found at Noorpora, Tral. It cannot be said with definiteness whether he has been abducted or he has gone underground.”

Dr. Shadi Lal Kachru fled the scene to a place of safety. He lost all by way of material goods but his losses in books are enormous. The books numbering a thousand including journals and magazines stolen from his residence have been mutilated or sold as scrap. Some of the books which he has lost are as under :-

1. Short practice of Surgery-Love and Bailey
2. Farquharson's operative Surgery
3. Harrison's Text Book of Internal Medicine
4. Clinical Methods in Surgery-K. Dass
5. Hutchinson's Clinical Methods in Medicine
6. Text book of obstetrics-C.S. Dawn
7. Shaw's Text-book of Gynaecology
8. Text book of Paediatrics-O.P. Ghai
9. Clinical Pharmacology-Lawrence
10. Meteria Medica-Ghosh
11. Gray's Anatomy
12. Modi's text-book of Forensic Medicine and Jurisprudence
13. Urology-D. R. Smith

S.N. Zadoo (Suman)

S.N. Zadoo passed his graduation in 1944 from S.P. College, Srinagar. He took his Masters Degree in Sanskrit from Lahore in 1946. After having earned Diploma in Library Science he joined services in 1947 as assistant librarian in J&K High Court. He passed Honours in Hindi from Kashmir University in 1958 in first division. In 1978-80 he did L.L.B from Jammu University through correspondence. He retired as Deputy Registrar from J&K High Court.

S. N. Zadoo is a poet who writes under the pen-name of "Suman". He is well-versed in Kashmir Shaivism and is recognised as an erudite scholar on the subject. In recognition of his scholarship he was awarded a prize containing seventy-eight volumes on various facets of Kashmir Shaivism by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir in

1966. For preparing a bio-data of Master Zinda Koul he was awarded a prize by the Cultural Academy.

He has contributed numerous articles on Kashmir lore and learning to various magazines and journals. He also translated fore-most works of Shaivism into Hindi and written commentaries on them in Sanskrit.

About the losses that he has suffered by way of books he writes:-

"I belong to a family where Sanskrit learning is valued as an asset. My father, Pāndit R.N. Zadoo, was a great scholar of Sanskrit and worked as editor, Sanskrit Section, in the Research Department. He had a number of rare manuscripts on Kashmir philosophy of Shaivism which I received as a precious bequest from him. The same I am dismayed to convey have been looted and must have been torn, mutilated or burnt.

I had may own books on Sanskrit poetics, Sanskrit drama and Sanskrit poetry. The number was more than a thousand which I had purchased from my meagre earnings. I had made additions to the works on Kashmir Shaivism which were bequeathed to me by my father. K.C. Pandey's monumental work on Abhinavgupta, Jaidev's translations of Shiva Sutra and other works on Spanda and Pandey's translation of "Bhaskari" adored my small library. All the seventy-eight volumes that were given to me by the state government in appreciation of my Sanskrit learning have also been looted and I am told that these works of tremendous cultural value have been sold to retailers by weight who tear their pages to convert them into cones for selling their groceries.

I have lost my own writings which were published in journals and magazines. With their loss I feel as if I had never been put to learning institutions where I learnt to think creatively and write creatively. I had translated Tantrasar of Bhagwan Abhinavgupta into Hindi which I have lost and its loss is shocking. I had also translated

Siddhitrayi of Utpaldev into Hindi which also is lost in the loot. I had some rare works of Sanskrit aesthetics and astrology. The same were in Sharda Script. The margins of the works contained miniature paintings which if enlarged would have blossomed out into full fledged paintings.

The loss of books which I valued so much has turned me depressive.”

Dr. K.L. CHOWDHARY

Dr. K.L. Chowdhary is a reputed physician and neurologist. He did his M.D.(medicine) from Delhi University and earned a fellowship in Neurology from London . Despite his brilliance as a physician he was superseded many a time by the Muslimised governments of Jammu and Kashmir. When he got displaced from his native place he was the Professor of Medicine in Medical College, Srinagar. Dr. Chowdhary is the life-breath of the movement that the Kashmiri Pandits have launched for homeland of which they stand bereft and deprived. Though a doctor by profession he has established his standing as a theoretician of depth and understanding. His assessments about the developments in Kashmir as published in local and national press are read with bated breath. He has also suffered losses by way of books and he writes:—

“No sooner did I leave Kashmir on Ist May, 1990 on an indefinite period of exile than I realized that, besides being forced to foresake my motherland, I was leaving behind a legacy and a treasure spanning four generations and collected over nearly 100 years by my grand parents, parents, my wife, my children and my books, journals, encyclopaedias and reference manuals. Yes, we left behind books on art and craft, literature and language, science and religion, psychology and philosophy, classics and some rare manuscripts, books in English, Urdu, Hindi, Kashmiri, Sanskrit and Persian and translations of great works of art from one language into another. I don't know the exact count but the whole collection would not be fewer than five thou-

sand. All that I carried with me was the Bhagvat-Gita, Gitanjali, complete works of shakespeare, Glimpses of world History by Nehru, the Rubayaat of Omerkhayaam and the latest text-book of Medicine by Harrison. I wish I had carried more and stuffed them into the suit-case which I carried along in place of the clothes I retrieved in haste.

I left behind a 50-year collection of my father's law books and library at his house at Barbarshah-SP College Lane Srinagar-spanning his professional career from 1935 to 1988 which included all the All India Reporters, books on constitutional and criminal law, other law manuals and reference books on legal procedure and civil law-all told nearly a thousand books. He had willed to donate the whole collection to the High Court Library of Srinagar and though I got lucrative offers for the lot I would not betray my father's command. Various people who occupied the house from time to time without my permission but within my knowledge offered to safe-keep the books but I hear that the collection is slowly dissolving and all that is left now is in a bad shape.

The library at my house in Indira Nagar, Srinagar included the following:-

1. Text Medical books on various disciplines of Medicine, viz; general medicine, neurology, cardiology, psychiatry, nephrology, tropical medicine, gynaecology and obstetrics etc.
2. Medicinal journals spanning our career from 1967 in Medicine

a) Indian Heart Journal	Year 1978 to 1990
b) Neurology India	Year 1974 to 1990
c) Journal of Indian Medicinal Association	Year 1968 to 1990
d) Journal, Association Physicians of India.	Year 1968 to 1990
e) British Medical Journal	Year 1972 to 1982

- f) Annals of Internal Medicine Year 1976 to 1984
- g) Indian Journal of obstetrics and gynaecology. Year 1969 to 1990
- 3. Periodical (non-medicals)**
 - a) National Geographic Year 1980 to 1990
 - b) Readers Digest Year 1940 to 1990
 - c) Condensed Readers Digest Year 1962 to 1978

4. English literature

Classics, drama, Novels, Poetry by all time greats in English language representing the various continents where the language is spoken - numbering nearly 1500 books."

5. Hindi Books

On religion, novels, short-stories and the great epics, nearly 250.

6. Urdu Books

Including poetry by great urdu poets, Nearly 50.

7. Kashmiri and Persian books at least 10 including some old manuscripts.

Besides these were a number of Atlases, books of general information, three English dictionaries, one dictionary each in Hindi and Urdu and numerous other common journals like the Illustrated Weekly of India, India Today, Time Magazine, Sarita etc for which we were regular subscribers for more than three decades.

What I miss most in exile is the company of the great men and women who have immortalized themselves through their written works. I feel intellectually crippled. The books call me to my home-land as much as the roots and the history of 5,000 years."

12 KASHMIRI PANDITS AS MIGRANTS

The peace-loving and patriotic ethno-religious minority of Kashmiri Pandits has been languishing in humiliating and debasing exile for the last eight years as a fall-out of terrorist tyranny generated and unleashed by the armed Muslim secessionists seeking Islamisation of Kashmir and its perpetuation by annexation with Pakistan. The entire community is faced with a grim tragedy and has been obliged to battle for survival at each step and end. The cruel rulers living in sealed ivory towers enjoying carnival of power and pelf bereft of human empathies have not only politicised the sombre tragedy but have also taken a resort to dubious formulations justifying the label that they have tagged onto the victims of terrorism. Attempts are to drown this community in the intrigues of terrorism, Islamic bigotry and secessionism and the impression is solidly reinforced and strengthened by the ruinous neglect and sadistic apathy that have been displayed towards it. The gnawing concerns, immediate and beyond, of this beleaguered community in exile have not been addressed. The members of this community as victims to the storm of communalism and fanaticism are refugees in their own country suffering pangs of insecurity and deprivation, torments of neglect and insensitivity.

What is astonishing that Govt. of India despite loud signals from the ground did not mind them and continued to be sunk in a state of passivity and dismaying as it is failed in its constitutional obligations of providing security at least of life and limb to the members of this indigenous commu-

nity. How is it that Govt. of India through its insouciance and insensitivity appears to be on the same wave-length with the secession-seeking fundamentalist Islamic groups drawn from the local populace in cohorts with the Pan-Islamic forces to push this hapless community into a state of extinction? The community which has been a lustrous column of Hindu edifice of culture and civilisation and pulsating model of what is Indian in Kashmir has been dumped like garbage in tentages, one-room colonies and rented slums and has been losing fast its stamina, resilience and a whole spectrum of inner resources. For the effete Govt. of India they are not refugees while Bangladesh intruders are and that is why they are nomenclatured as "migrants", not even the displaced persons on the basis of a deceitfully contrived thesis that "The complainants are appropriately styled as migrants as they have migrated on their own from areas in the valley to Jammu or other areas of the country. Their claim to designate them as internally displaced persons is not acceptable to the government of India on the ground that displacement has been self-imposed".⁹¹

The same thesis has been fairly fed and broadly doled out to the Indian media which was 'unable to conceal the facts to its readership and have tried to minimise and ideologically cleanse the news by calling the refugees "migrants" by blaming them for communal friction in Jammu where many of them live in refugee camps'.

The politicals of the Indian brand given to chicanery and trickstry and more than most intrigue have not fumed concern about and refused to project the blighted condition of the Kashmiri Pandit refugees who have been forced at gun-point to abandon their native homes and hearths. The fact remains that the Kashmiri Pandits have not crossed international borders and taken refuge in an alien land and that is supposed to militate against their entitlement to the status of refugees under established international law. But what is highly significant and as such cannot be lost sight

of is that this hundred percent literate community cognised as such all over the world was cruelly thrown out of its home-land by the armed Muslim fundamentalists when there was a total collapse of constitutional machinery and the government of the day perceptibly worked in tandem with the Islamic secessionists allowing them support and succour and time space to fan out and proliferate their base and appeal. It smacked of an intrigue on part of the degenerate political culture in the country to concoct and figment a theory that Kashmiri pandit exodus unprecedented in the history of independent India was sponsored or self-willed thereby effacing out the fundamental cause of fundamentalist insurgency leading to the cataclysmic event of forced migration and dispersal. The Kashmiri pandit compulsion to buzz off their land of genesis leaving behind their houses and assets assumes clarity if and when the full-scale background scenario of fundamentalist developments within Kashmir is not put under wraps and is given unbiased projection in its broad contours. The Kashmiri Pandits as a natural sequence of the fundamentalist proliferation were targeted for killings, rape, torture and destruction thereby generating a volatile and lethal situation in which it was extremely difficult, nay impossible, to live a civilised life of honour and dignity. A conspiracy was hatched in the crucible of mosque to purge Kashmir of infidels and reclaim the lost land for Islam. What happened on 19/20th January, 1990 was the climax of the whole process which was in actuality commenced and given a push up by the Sayyids in 14th century and effacingly pursued by the communal revanchists masquerading as nationalists. The Muslim crowds, merciless, coarse and savagely cruel, squalling war-cries and flitting about the lanes and byelanes of the valley traumatised Kashmiri Pandit denizens of a concentration camp suffering suffocation, torture and persecution. The exodus was a miracle worked by Pandits to escape the inferno of violence echoing medieval and base barbarity to the freedom across the Bannihal tunnel.

With a view to putting the whole scenario in a proper perspective it needs be said that the fundamental cause necessitating the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits is the Muslim bigotry. The 1989- 90 variety of exodus of Pandits is the sixth in the series of their exoduses from their land of birth. As revealed by the telling facts of history the first major exodus dates back to the barbarous times of Sikander Butshikan (1389-1413) who unleashed a reign of terror for conversion of Hindu Kashmir to the Islamic religion. The exodus was so massive in its scale and dimension that only eleven Kashmiri pandit families stayed back in their home-land.⁹² The processes of conversion continued without a let up at various stages of Muslim rule. The basic and glaring cause of the exoduses in the past was Muslim bigotry and the cause has remained unchanged and immutable. Even in secular and democratic India that is pledged to a constitution with fundamental guarantees for its citizens the Kashmiri pandits have been pushed out lock, stock and barrel with the patent aim of capturing Kashmir to establish a theo-fascist state thereby exploding the myth of composite culture and farce of pluralism.

As per the deceptive formulations of the official class of political elite the Kashmiri pandits in absence of a refugee law in the country are migrants, not refugees or displaced persons. Fitting in the scheme of things as devised by the said political class the word "migrant" camouflages Muslim revolt communal and sectarian in content and motivation and carries within its ambit an element of voluntariness, self-will or self-motivation to the exclusion of an external force or factor which is none other than Muslim frenzy for jihad based on bigotry. The violent and impetuous conflict swamping the length and breadth of the valley brought to a flash-point by the armed insurgency launched by the bigoted terrorists proved a catalyst in transforming the whole political scenario in Kashmir. It is only an ostrich-like audacity to deny the fact that the entire thrust of Muslim insurgency from seminal stages to its climax was

and continues to be against the patriotic community of Kashmiri pandits. In fact, the evil forces of Jihad as in the past so now opened their agenda by rape, torture and carnage of Kashmiri Pandits who were catapulted to the eye of a storm by denouncing them as "informers", "fifth column" and "unpaid agents of India" and such other depreciatory labels.

Violent strife and conflict and unendurable living conditions are the key factors that have caused the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from their native land. The Government of India in its response to the International Commission of Jurists based in Geneva has acknowledged killings of Kashmiri pandits and perpetration of morbid violence on them and also collapse of rule of law as cardinal factors leading to their mass exodus. This position of Government of India as shaped by political mandarins governed by the unprincipled principle of political expediency is not only at variance with but in violent contradiction to the stance it has taken in the National Human Rights Commission. The vivid dichotomy between the two positions is not only duplicitous but open exhibition of fraud played on the hapless refugees who have suffered enormous losses in terms of life and assets.

The response reads, "Most of the Kashmiri Hindu Community fled from the valley in early 1990. The assassination of a number of leading Hindus and threats of violence by the militants were enough to persuade the Hindu Community to flee." ⁹³

The response further reads, "The targeted killing of members of Hindu Community which has led to the exodus of 2,50,000 members of the community resulting in a change in the very demographic profile of the area and blatant religious cleansing." ⁹⁴

The response also comments, "The instability in the region has led to the displacement of a large number of Hindus or Kashmiri Pandits. On 1989-90 some 90,000 Pandits left the valley for fear of attacks on their safety. To

date 2,50,000 out of 3,00,000 are estimated to have left. A number of these displaced persons are now in camps in Jammu and Delhi”⁹⁵

The above mentioned factors of strife and intolerable living conditions are the specific factors that have led to the refugee movements all over the world. There are authentic reports to suggest that 15 million refugees are in diaspora all over the world and they are properly covered by a legal commission operating under the aegis of United Nations Organisation. But the internally displaced persons outnumber the refugees and as of now they are 30 million in actual numbers and are in diaspora within their native countries. Their status and position as internally displaced persons has been by and large recognised by their respective governments or by the internationally recognised organisations under various linkages and covenants to which the governments are a party. But the Government of India despite forced migrations from the Punjab, Kashmir and North Eastern states has not deliberately framed a refugee law to tackle with the humanitarian problem of internally displaced persons, but has chosen to be ruthlessly arbitrary and callous and tackle the problem on administrative level. And this arbitrariness determined by extraneous considerations has settled the nomenclature of the Kashmiri Pandits as ‘migrants’ in contravention of their status as refugees or internally displaced persons.

The Kashmiri Pandits as an exiled community stand deprived of the original territory that they ancestrally belonged to and called their own in terms of history, identity and culture. Though a component of the state of Jammu and Kashmir they as a spill-over effect of ethnic purge and in face of altered ground realities have been forced for existential reasons to dwell in camps and rented slums in Jammu and its adjoining districts. It is a matter of gnawing concern that they have lost the care and protection of their own state of which they are and continue to be historically, culturally and legally an inalienable part and component.

The dubious word "migrant" is closely akin to and firmly buttresses the state thesis that in view of their voluntary choice of being in self-exile they do not for any cogent reason deserve and must, therefore suffer the loss of the protective umbrella which could serve them in good stead in their state of indigence and destitution. The enormous amount of hostility and harassment that they have been subjected to even during the Presidential rule confirms that they are no longer the citizens covered under constitutional frame-work. The position remains qualitatively unchanged even though popular rule much bruited about has been resuscitated in the state.

The Governor, K.V. Krishna Rao, as an appointee of President of India, cynically and superciliously is said to have disowned Kashmiri pandits by telling a delegation that had called on him for an inter-face on the formulated demands of the refugee community that they were not his concern nor were they on his agenda. Did he have such a constitutional mandate as Governor of the state to disinherit a segment of the native populace which is "pushed out" by the Muslim marauders and *prima facie* stands wronged and more than most cruelly deprived of its native abode *en masse*? That the Pandits are not on his agenda is a frank admission of the connivance and complicity of the state which he rules with all the executive powers with the Islamic agenda of genocide of an ethno-religious minority. The animosity of the state with Girish Saxena as the Governor of the state assumed a shrill stridency and a sharper edge when the slots in the governing apparatus held by members of the minority community were fraudulently filled up in their absence in exile thereby divesting them of their fundamental right of being an integral part of the governing apparatus.

They are not considered and factually are rejected as a part of the state is testified by the blatant denial and sealing of employment opportunities for the minority both at the state and central levels. The "herded out" employees

and the entire student community harbouring Hindu faith have been victims of crass discrimination and worst brand of apartheid and Government of India is a front-rank fighter against apartheid in Africa and elsewhere but perpetuates it in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The policies of the two governors with their source in Delhi have contributed their fair share of wisdom to the Islamisation of the state apparatus which is deemed a stepping stone to the ultimate goal of secession from the democratic polity of India.

The installation of popular rule has equally belied the hopes of the exiled community for a fair deal and equalitarian treatment. They are meted out the treatment of aliens by the state of which they are undeniably and inextricably a part and parcel. The government of Farooq Abdullah said to be infested with pro-Pakistan moles and ISI agents has refused to be objective and non-sectarian too. The utterances of the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, inside and outside the state legislature, have added to the insecurity and destabilisation of the exiled community. There was a mass massacre of Kashmiri pandits at Sangrampora by the local Muslim killers. The three brights of the community were selected for brutal slaughter at Gool in the hills of Jammu and the administration proved so callous as not to feel morally obliged to share the shock and grief with the bereaved families deprived of their near and dear ones. Harassment of the displaced employees continues unabated. None of their pressing problems have been addressed, much less solved. No tattered tent has been replaced. Sanitary conditions in camps are the same abject. The few who have found employment on the recommendations of a Muslimised board operating under a Kashmiri Pandit renegade do not stand benefited for administrative hurdles in their postings and other trumped up hassles. The Pandits though very few in numbers drawing doles from the government agencies are accused of retarding the pace of farcical development forget-

ting the terrorist-bureaucratic nexus for siphoning off and looting the major share of the development funds.

The hounded out community which is in a state of traumatic exile and diaspora has been forced to inhabit the camps and rented slums in different states of the country. If objectivity is a guide, it can be said without fear or favour that the displaced Kashmiri pandits are not treated with the same hostility, contempt and vengefulness that their counter parts are faced with in parts of their own state. Yet it is no consolation to the Pandits and does not in any manner compensate the traumatic loss of the home turf and context that they historically and legally are aligned with but as of now are wallowing in pangs of exile through the machinations of Muslim revanchists. As *bona fide* citizens of their own state they have been coerced to dwell on the lands of other states in Delhi, Punjab, UP, Bombay and Madhya Pradesh and depend on the care and protection of those states of which they do not form a part and parcel in political and legal contexts.

The loss of ancestral territory and dependence on the hospitality of other states are the two fundamental factors determining the status of displace refugees. Barbara-Harrel-Bond as an expert on refugees is forth-right in her views in nomenclaturing those persons as refugees who "have lost the protection of their own state and must rely on the willingness of others to observe humanitarian norms." Prior to their forced exodus the Kashmiri Pandits were rooted, had their own dwellings, small or big, lived a normal life of civilised individuals with grace and aplomb and procreated and bred their families for a decent and productive societal role. But in sharp contrast to it they now in tents and slums are a waste material, bereft of opportunities, prone to diseases and afflictions and reduced to energy-sapping indigent conditions of life and living. More than most, they live in conditions which can be termed as "refugee- like" and prowl about in conditions which again are "refugee like". The plight of the Kashmiri

pandits in the camps, one - room tenements and rented slums resembles and is qualitatively the same as that of the refugees who have crossed international borders for refuge and protection.

The Government of India has played the Hindu refugees from Kashmir foul. It has failed to evolve a comprehensive and organic policy with respect to them. The community of Pandits despite its steeling through the oppressive rule of Muslims has come to a crisis and a breaking-point wherefrom it might be unable to re-coup and recover. The powers that be in Delhi have never felt concerned about the fate of hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandit refugees languishing in poverty, squalor and debasing degradation in the refugee camps. They have been hybernating in exile for the last eight years sundered apart from mainstream. The stamping out of Pandits was mapped by the local Islamic fundamentalists with a specific purpose and it followed a well laid-out plan and strategy.⁹⁶

The craftily coined appellation of "Migrant" defining the nature of Kashmiri Pandit exodus from the valley might be concealing an effort or a tendency to accord a formal recognition, say under severe pressure, to the Muslim character of the state as is being expounded by the foreign intriguers and their local proxies. The Kashmiri Pandits as aboriginals from the valley are deemed a problem who normally under international covenants and laws cannot be deprived of their inherent right to inhabit the valley. With a view to diluting their claims in such an eventuality what is needed is to rebuff the hapless refugees that they had migrated on their own and had chosen to be in self-exile.

The complete Islamisation of the state as pursued by the wily secessionists without check or restraint from the Government of India has purged the ethno-religious minority members from their native abodes to transform Kashmir into a Muslim haven. The Tibetan and Sinkiangese Muslims way back in Nehru's time were accepted on the soil of Kashmir on the basis of their Islamic colour and religion.

The Muslims coming in hordes from West Bengal, UP, Bihar *et al* getting married to the local Muslim girls are reported to be fast gaining the status of State subjects in contravention of laws on the Statute Book. But the genuine refugees, Hindus and Sikhs, from West Pakistan are denied state-hood lest it should tilt the population profile of the state. There is a conspiracy afoot to purge the Pandits even from the Jammu soil. Bogeys are created to build walls of dissensions between them and the local Hindu population. Farooq Abdullah's incitement to the people of Jammu meets the same end. If ideological and constitutional foundations of the Indian state are to be kept in place, what is needed is the resolution of the political and ideological situation emerging from the forced expulsion of Kashmiri Pandits. In concrete terms be it put that the crux of the problem is that the only Muslim majority state in India has refused outright to co-exist with a miniscule Hindu minority.

The Kashmiri Pandits in exile have not been burdened with the label of refugees or displaced persons perhaps for the fact that the Government of India refuses to own and is in no way committed to the responsibility of re-settling the displaced persons or refugees in their native abodes with political and economic rights and guarantees that they were bereft of even prior to their brutal externment. It is pithily suggested by the Kashmiri Pandit watchers that the word "migrant" allows an escape route to legitimise the vicious developments on Kashmir front by a weak, emaciated, fractured and lack-lustre government in power.

For the Government of India which failed to protect the pro-India minorities in Kashmir Kashmiri Pandits on home front are migrants as they are perceived to have voluntarily marched out and therefore have lost the rights and privileges of statehood but for international consumption the same human cattle dumped in camps and slums are 'displaced persons' as they were targetted for killings and put to severe threats. It is not only dichotomous but

sounds scandalous and exposes the inhuman face of the Government of India cursed with double-speak.

The misery of Kashmiri Pandit refugees wasting like worms in drains is delineated for the general readers.

Gole Pulli Camp, Talab Tillo, Jammu

This was the first camp that was set up by the government in the wake of massive exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from their natural habitat. The camp is inhabited by six hundred Pandits hailing from various areas in the valley. It is a model of inhuman and shameless treatment meted out to a cultured community reduced to the abominable status of refugees by the rulers who have battered on the marrow of the poor and bereft and inhabit posh houses glittering with stuffed illgotten wealth. The refugees have been dumped in the camp and left to their care. No person of any consequence has visited the camp so that he could get a feel of the camp conditions and move in the direction of suggesting measures for their improvement. The tents are torn to shreds and their replacement is out of question for the fact that it is a farm house for the human cattle. The sun and rains are great tormentors for the inhabitants. The proposals to shift the camp to Mishriwalla could not fructify for long as the government deep sunk in paralysis must enjoy and draw vicarious pleasure from the blighted condition of the Pandits who have "injured the psyche of Muslims." The camp is worse than a slum. Heaps of dirt and garbage are seen strewn around. It is the foul and stinking smell that reigns supreme over the environs. The latrines are abominably dirty and over-flowing and there are no arrangements to clean them on a regular basis. In some tents more than one family could be seen huddled together. If a family chooses to move out of the tent to a rented accommodation, the Relief Agencies score it off their registers and stop their meagre dole on which most of them eke out an existence.

As the camp is a death-hole, the dwellers afflicted with varied diseases and ailments as a result of foul surround-

ings have been falling fast into it. Many young men and women kissed death prematurely and could not be saved for want of proper medical treatment. Some have fallen prey to sun-strokes while many more died from snake bites.

As a humanitarian act, the government after a long persuasion set up a dispensary. But dismaying as it is no medicines were made available to it. The camp dwellers have fallen to physical and psychological diseases and for treatment they are forced to depend on private doctors. The dispensary is of no use to them. The camp is dwelt by 230 scholars who are at various levels of educational career. How can there be a school for them? Long back Muhta Khan blazed the trail of denying schools to the Kashmiri Pandits. The government under the tight leash of Muslims has taken a vow to follow the blazed trail. There are schools run by government in the area but under the impact of racist policies the Kashmiri Pandit scholars are not allowed admission in such schools. Despite this apartheid Pandit scholars manage their education by traversing long distances despite inconvenience and discomfort.

The educated young men and women have been denied jobs both in the Central and State services. The Kashmiri Pandits were declared a creamy layer right in 1947 when Mandal was in oblivion. So the employables are in agony and distress as there is no glittering future for them. The retired people whose numbers are increasing are facing economic indigence. They live on their meagre pensions and the government based on ostentatious Nehru-Gandhi model has not come to their aid. Those still in service are victims to apartheid. They have not been adjusted and therefore are vegetating & atrophying. Their promotion avenues are blocked. Even if the crafty government promotes them, they are fiated to join their posts in Kashmir where they were declared enemies of Islam and theocratic state of Pakistan.

Transport Nagar Camp, Jammu

The camp is so sunk in filth and foul smell that it mirrors the government apathy, indifference and intransigence unto the hapless refugees. Representations were shot and pleas made to the concerned authorities about the unlivable conditions in the camp but they have not stirred a throbbing heart. The camp situate on the outskirts of Jammu city is as old as exodus itself. There are 125 families living in the camp consisting of a building with four storeys.

There are no arrangements for water supply except that the pitiless government headed by a callous Governor has harnessed a tanker that supplies water to the entire population in the camp once in a day. With the loud noise of the horn women rush down from all the storeys to collect water and exigency has taught them to form queues otherwise the driver of the tanker will shower a ridiculous taunt on them which they detest. For women inhabiting the fourth storey of the house it has been a great hazard and some of them lost their lives as a result of excessive strain on their hearts.

There is a spacious hall in each floor of the building where twenty-five families have been huddled together. Their great predicament is loss of privacy.

Heaps of dirt and garbage emitting out foul smell lie scattered over the stairs of the building. There are no arrangements for clearance of the dirt to keep the environs clean and healthy. The surrounding ambience is stinking disseminating infections and diseases. Premature deaths are on an increase. As many as fifteen persons died unexpectedly and could not be saved because of serious infections they had caught. Latrines present a filthy spectacle and are a source of dirt and infection.

The government as an eye wash has opened a dispensary in the camp. But it is a farce. There are no medicines available as could have saved the ill and aged from expenditure on them out of their meagre doles. There are no

arrangements for shifting the patients to the city hospitals at odd hours. The inmates genuinely complain of government apathy.

There is no school for the scholars in the camp. There are no fewer than 160 learners at various stages of their educational career. There is no primary school for the scholars who are at a preparatory stage. But education is the most valued article of a Pandit. The scholars despite the scorching sun walk distances to the schools at Satwari and Shastri Nagar. The condition of the schools for the "migrants" is distressing and hateful.

Nagrota camp, Jammu

The total ambience of Nagrota camp accommodating five thousand Kashmiri Pandit men, women and children is pathetic and awful and this camp in reality symbolises the contempt and apathy of the powers that be unto the community punished for its undiluted patriotism and unflinching faith in the unity and integrity of India. What the condition of inmates in the camp exposes to the last shreds the trumpeted claims of the government authorities that the uprooted refugees have been comfortably placed and their problems mitigated to a larger extent.

The dwellers in the camp, frustrated and anguished, have been relentless in their pleadings with the authorities for improvement of the camp conditions, but have been dismayed at the persistent government apathy and negligence. Nothing concrete has been done to provide relief to the inmates who are now sullen and cynical and have lost faith in the government that can make tall promises but never fulfils them.

The government following the precedent of other camps has established a dispensary in the camp but has never bothered to equip it in terms of medicine and necessary equipment. It is an eye-wash only to show in papers that a dispensary has been set up in the camp and caters to the

health needs of nine hundred refugees. As the camp is a good distance away from the city proper, there should have been an ambulance at the beck and call of the camp dwellers who are ill and afflicted because of hard and penurious life they have been living at a stretch of land which is desert-like and turns into an inferno in the blazing sun. The inhabitants of the camp are so poor and bereft that they have lost their ailing kith and kin for want of medicines. The meagre dole of Rs.1800/- for a family of five members cannot suffice their basic necessities. The families comprising ten members are practically famished and starving. Who listens to their woes? They are the Hindu refugees and must suffer for their refusal to accept the Islamic faith.

There are no arrangements for water supply to the helpless refugees. The hand-pumps that have been installed are not working and need repairs. Petitions were made for their repair so that they serve a utility but nothing solid was done at least for full ten months. Some of the hand-pumps which as good luck would have it were working but failed to meet the demands of five thousand people who have to bathe, drink, cook and do other chores. Long queues of women around the working hand-pump can be seen wearing frustration and anger.

The authorities lacking even in low level common sense have set up these pumps close to the latrines with the result the water that is drawn out is infectious and polluted and causes and disseminates diseases. Nearly thirty people have fallen prey to various infectious ailments.

Mounds of garbage can be seen littered over the camp premises. Foul and stinking smell reigns supreme. There are no well organised efforts to keep the camp free from the foul smell of rotting waste materials with the result germs breed at a faster rate and spread diseases.

The camp has a population of 2800 school going scholars who have no arrangements for schooling within the

camp premises. At the prodding of parents they foot long distances to attend schools close to the city or in the nearby areas. The new budding scholars are at a disadvantage as there are no schools to admit them and they are not expected to walk over long distances to join a school whatever its quality is.

The government has shifted some camp dwellers to one room tenements which despite fanfare are virtual hovels and hell-holes. The construction of these hovels is flimsy. They turn leaky in rains. The members of the families living in them feel cramped, dull and miserable as they are huddled together like cattle and lack privacy. The camp dwellers have named them as pigeon-holes constructed by the government that vies with socialism and equality for all.

Most of the employables are graduates and post-graduates. The two Governors have been relentless in the onerous task of Muslim appeasement and as per government policy Pandits could not be given jobs for the fact that they left the valley on their own and had lost state protection. How absurd it is! The jobless youth yell that jobs are given to the Muslim killers who have destroyed Kashmir and patriots are left bereft and beleaguered.

Polytechnic Camp, Jammu

The Polytechnic camp inhabited by uprooted Pandits was originally set up in May 1990. If any person keen to learn what refugee life is like must pay a visit to this camp where stinking and foul smell rules the roost. The Pandits for their cardinal sin of being patriots were pushed out by the Muslim marauders who earned government protection then and continue to earn it now and were dumped in a camp like the one at polytechnic campus. Thirty-seven families are living here and could not be accommodated at some other camp where some amenities were available. There is a capacious hall measuring 22x11 feet which is accommodating no fewer than twenty-six families. They

are huddled like cattle in the hall and at a glance one can feel the tragedy and pathos of their lives. The other eleven families are left to fend for themselves. They have lived and slept in the open for years together and as a result of self-efforts have built kennels for themselves with gunny sheets and rags. The sun when it blazes maximum has rendered them half-dead, merely wailing and panting. The cold and chilly winds in winters numb their bones. But the government has not bothered a jot to provide them some relief from the wretched life they have been forced to live.

The Relief Commissioner who was contacted on many occasions did not care a hoot as he is instructed to create as many hurdles as he can and impose as much suffering as he can. He is the model of what his government is and the Government of India is mute and cannot open its mouth for a relief to a segment of population which is Hindu and if it dares do it, it will get scarred with the stain of anti-secular. Bereft of a thing like conscience he had not even the courtesy to depute some officer who could at least console these hapless Hindus.

Proliferating heaps of dirt and garbage at the very entrance of the cattle-farm is nauseating and stands testimony to the sadistic treatment meted out to the refugees who were forced to quit by the cruel Islamists. No Government authority feels interested in providing the dwellers the bare minimum level of sanitation so that they do not fall prey to the agonies of disease and ill health. Latrines have not been cleaned even once during the last five years. They are overflowing and are seminaries of all sorts of disease germs. What is worst the latrines during rains start flowing out dirt into the self-made kennels causing extreme misery and pain. The stinking seminaries of dirt and filth emit out foul smell that has caused numberless diseases especially chest and throat ailments so chronic that they refuse to be suppressed even by costly life-saving drugs.

There are no medical facilities available for the cattle of this farm-house. Despite pleadings, the government without a conscience has not just cared. A dispensary even as an eye-wash has not been set up.

There are not facilities of water supply to the worms in the camp. They are not humans. So they have not to wash, eat, drink and bathe. A syntax tank with low capacity was installed in the camp as a matter of great humanitarian act and that too is not serviceable. The women-folk as the worst sufferers of exile have to bear the agony of fetching water from a public post.

That there is no relief counter for disbursement of relief is another hassle that the camp dwellers are faced with. For the petty dole all and sundry in the camp including the ill and the aged have to go to the exhibition grounds and have to wait there for hours on end in scorching sun and drenching rain.

The camp situated in the campus of the Polytechnic is in the neighbourhood of the hostel for boys. As adolescents they misbehave with the young and budding girls in the camp. It is something intolerable for the Kashmiri Pandit respectables. There have been so many quarrels, but the menace has not ended.

Purkhoo Camp, Jammu

The Purkhoo camp is situated on the Jammu-Poonch national highway accommodating four thousand human cattle in tents and another bunch of two hundred cattle in one-room pigeon-holes, a visible stain on the Indian rulers, blunt and shameless. The tents do not speak but these tents do speak and vociferously convey the litany of miseries and sorrows that the human cattle have been suffering inside their cramped spaces. The tents as every on-looker can discernibly see are weather-beaten and have outlived their utility and therefore are incapable of sheltering the human animals from the rigours of the sun and chill cold

of winter months. The tents, tattered and battered, are overflowing to capacity and house eight persons instead of its normal capacity for four. In summer they heat up and torment the dwellers who are ducks of the lake and in rains they leak to the limit that inmates within them are little distinguishable from the pools of mud and slush in which they wallow. The one-room tenements are suffocating ovens in summer months and turn leaky in rains. The structures have fractured prematurely and are about to collapse and the government claims that it has incurred 37,000 in each of these flimsy structures. And refugees can roll out real figures about the constructions and corruption involved in them.

Most of the employables who are a staggering figure of thirteen hundred with degrees upto post-graduation have been made to waste away and vegetate. There have been special employment drives for the Muslims who have taken to guns for a fundamentalist agenda but there have been no drives for the Kashmiri Pandit patriots who have stood the fury of Muslim hurricane. The state government has well-known antipathy unto all shades of Hindus and is out to quench them out. What is surprising that the Central government if it can be called a government has also fallen in line at the persistent prodding of the Kashmiri Muslim politicians with anti-Pandit venom brimming their fangs. In absence of Jobs and other employment avenues the young men and women are frustrated and depressed and live a life of absolute penury and indigence.

The camp dwellers have not only to weather the horrors of weather vagaries but have also fallen prey to sun-strokes and snake-bites. Dozens have lost lives due to heat strokes as the camp dwellers living a starkly penurious life cannot afford gadgets to beat the heat and its baneful effects. Dozens have fallen a victim to the snake-bites. With few exceptions most of the victims lost their lives for want of quick treatment and timely assistance. As the victims to Muslim holocaust the camp dwellers are so poor and bereft

that they cannot afford beds and sleep on ground and that is why they fall prey to the snake-bites and the entire area where the camp has come up is snake infested.

The camp in its totality is a living spectacle of dirt, filth and insanitary conditions. There are no latrines. There are no bath-rooms. The authorities view the humans as two-footed animals and hence have dumped them in the animal farm-house which the camp in substance is. The authorities never felt the necessity for a drainage system. The refugees are forced to depend on the canal which flows by. They drink its water, bathe in its water and do other chores with the canal water. The canal has smothered the lives of many and its unclean water has caused many a disease resulting in numerous serious ailments.

The camp does not have any medical facility available. A medical team some time back was deputed to the camp site but it could not become functional for want of accommodation. There are no facilities available for shifting the seriously ailing persons to the city hospitals and for the purpose there should have been an ambulance available at least during odd hours. "But the human bipeds do not need medicare" argue men in corridors of power.

The camp dwellers have maintained the top record of 100% literacy level. There is a school that has been set up by the government at the persistent demand of Pandits to meet the educational needs of their learners. But the school is in a deplorable state and does not look like a school. It is without a chalk and without a black-board. The school has a regular attendance of twelve hundred learners who are to be accommodated in five tents supplied by the government. In all weathers, fair or foul, they have to receive their lessons in the open. There are no fans made available to the school. The scholars do not have a fully equipped laboratory for experiments. There is no library with a view to expanding the mental horizons of learners. The worst is that there is no arrangement for drinking water. The scholars have to depend on the infectious and unclean water of

the canal. There is a tank that could be seen broken and the educational authorities pushing the operation black-board have not thought it wise to equip the school for the progeny of human bipeds.

The one-room tenements are not worthy of habitation. The room is so cramped and small that one cannot sleep in it with one's legs stretched out. There is no ventilation. Materials used in the structures are sub-standard. The camp dwellers authentically believe that two thousand is the maximum amount invested in such flimsy and shaky structures.

Pran Nath Bhat, a refugee in the camp, hapless and poor was not provided a tent or a pigeon - hole to eke out his existence. It was for a full period of twenty days that the human animal was forced to live in the open under the blue canopy. No authorities were moved and paid any heed. Ultimately the Kashmir Times published Pran Nath's tale of woe and neglect buttressing it with a photograph. The Relief Commissioner along with his staff who is said to have batted at the distress of the refugees ultimately moved in the direction of providing him a leaky tent. It is not the case of Pran Nath only. Every refugee is a Pran Nath, a human biped, who has been harassed, humiliated and insulted at every step and end and the country is going to celebrate the 50 years of independence. Hip-hip hurrah for the morbid Indian rulers!

A Report on Camps

"'Kashmiri migrants' camps are a shanty township of pucca houses, tin sheds and tattered tents which house impoverished Kashmiri Pandit families. That it mocks at the plight of these families with a large number of women and children does not seem to revolt the senses of any one in authority."⁹⁷

These words are from Mahendra Ved who paid a visit to the camps at Mishriwalla, Muthi and other locations and

felt moved at the pitiable condition of Kashmiri Pandit refugees. He records:-

"Even accepting that trying to make 27,000 families comfortable away from their homes and hearths in the sylvan valley is a thankless job, the state administration has fallen far short of even the minimum standards. A peep into some of the camps showed that they are no more than organised slums. The future holds no hope for them, if reports of their house-holds being sold with the help of fake documents and a conniving bureaucracy at the lower level are any indication.....at Purkhoo camp near here 200 have died since the camp was set up Refugees say there is no relief, no compensation for their houses lost or burnt down by the terrorists way back in 1990. They say their service records have been mutilated or destroyed. The government should supply them with duplicate so that they could make their claims.....He (Chief Secretary) admits that pucca houses built four years ago have leaking roofs but adds new lot of houses are better than the first ones. "We had thought it was a short term problem but unfortunately it has stretched so long," he says. An embarrassing minister remarks, "It was wrong to have assumed that this would be a short term problem By all means give Rs.15 crore to our butchers in Char-e-sharief. We too grieve at the burning down of the shrine of our Nand Rishi. But how much is being spent to restore the temples that have been burnt down? Are not all communities to be treated equally under the constitution?"⁹⁸

The tents sheltering thousands of Kashmiri Pandit refugees reveal a saga of untold woe and misery. Their tops have given way under the lashing rains, gusty winds and scorching rays of the blazing sun. They have gaping holes through which rain and wind directly enter the tents causing extreme pain and agony to the human animals living in them. The flaps of the tents are worn-out and shredded and the canvas that they are made of is weather-beaten, torn loose and thinned out.

A report in the Kashmir Sentinel mentions, "They(tents) tell the tale of the woes of their inmates whose hopes and dreams are in shreds too. These homeless inmates from the land of chinars, ice-cool waters and golden meadows are a wronged people, forced to live at wrong places. Living in arid, rocky and depressed surroundings, they are not only at the mercy of the generally unfriendly weather, but still more unfriendly government, which is outrightly callous."⁹⁹

On a visit to a family in the camp a KS reporter puts:-

"Back home they had a cosy and comfortable home in a South Kashmir village where the music of gurgling waters of a stream, flowing by the side of the house lulled them to sleep at night and lilted them to wakefulness at dawn. The old lady presided over a Joint family that owned paddly lands a small orchard and a small business in the village. The girl now rubbing the kickenware that has out-lived the utility was a blithesome little lassie studying in the local school. It was indeed a life of comfort and contentment. Today the family, like hundreds of other displaced Kashmiri pandit families, lives in the arid surroundings of a dreary tented camp on the outskirts of Jammu. It ekes out its existence on a pitiable government dole and some small time jobs that the male members manage to get now and then. The education of the children has been badly hit by this life of homelessness, want and penury..... Pain is writ large on their faces, their expressions, their actions, their behaviour, in fact their entire existence."¹⁰⁰

13 CONVERSIONS AS MUSLIM MALAISE

There is hardly any conceivable excess and atrocity which the Kashmiri Pandits as a characteristic religious group have not been subjected to by the Muslim marauders. Apart from the pogrom having no semblance of a human face that was perpetrated on them the devastating catastrophe that could befall them was the forcible conversion to an alien religion of Islam. History is a pulsating witness to the brutal conversions that were realised by Muslim monarchs whether of Sunni or Shia brand through spilling of blood, hacking of flesh and splintering of body limbs for transforming religious complexion of Kashmir. Sikander, Ali Shah, Malik Saif-ud-din, Kaji Chak, Aurangzeb and Afghan surrogates as medieval despots were at pains to devise all instruments of coercion and repression with the ominous motive of proliferating the support-base of Islam which in Kashmir at the initial stages was near negligible. With the loss of political power to the Sikhs the raging fury of proselytisation campaigns came to a sudden halt but the deep and crippling scar of conversion was already inflicted on the religious personality of Kashmir. Some of the neo-converts who were traumatised by the forcible conversion to Islam harked back to their birth religion. Had the process found support from the power structures it would have turned into a roaring tide.

With the decay of Sikh state the reins of power in Kashmir were handed over to the Dogras by the British masters and with the speed of lightning a consistent campaign of

calumny and virulent hatred was unleashed by the Punjab based violent and fanatic Muslim groups urging the Kashmiri Muslims to dismantle the Dogra rule spoke by spoke. Demands were yelled that the rulers who were dubbed as staunch Hindus should cease to create hurdles in the holy task of conversions from other faiths and should desist from interference in the launch of straightforward hate campaigns against the religious enemies.

In the murderous loot of 1931 the seven Kashmiri Pandits belonging to a single family of the village of Kanikoot near yusmarg were offered conversion as an alternate choice to escape slaughter. In 1932 when riots were triggered off in Mirpur the Hindus were massacred, arsoned and coerced to accept Islamic faith. Forty - one Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam in the Kotli Police Station area. In the Seri Police Station area four hundred and thirty-five Hindus from ten villages were coerced to join the Islamic ranks. In Kotli Tehsil five Hindus were slaughtered who reportedly rejected the offer of conversion to Islam. A Maulvi, combative and violent, from Kashmir was responsible for the riots in Rajouri with their quick impact in all the adjoining areas.⁸¹

"Islam is in danger" (and ironically it is always deemed in danger) is the standard Muslim tactics of generating Muslim paranoia against Hindus and mobilising the Muslim hordes for unleashing wild frenzy for Jihad. In the ensuing tidal wave of chaos and mayhem the Hindu minority for one reason or the other is charged with betrayal and sacrilege to Islam and struck with fear psychosis generated in ample measure by the yelling and howling Muslim crowds many succumb to the sword of Islam. Pt. Hargopal, a poet and historian, known as the Lion of Kashmir, along with Janki Nath and Sham Narain was accused of having used abusive language against Islam over a trifling issue of trespass which, his neighbour, a Moulvi, refused to remove despite numerous requests and entreaties. Hargopal was put under detention to quell the mob fury. His licence as

a practising lawyer was cancelled. Despite court acquittal the Muslims as a combination of brute force and harsh coercion never felt satisfied with the quantum of punishment awarded to him. Ultimately all the three were exiled from their native homes.

The tribal raid of 1947 had all the contours of Muslim Jihad and primeval savagery. Thousands of Hindus, men, women and children whose staggering numbers were never divulged were mercilessly butchered and conversions as a Muslim malaise resorted to on a large scale. Till the adjoining areas of Baramulla and the town itself were under the deluge of tribals Kashmiri Pandits who were unable to move to the safer zones in the city of Srinagar were not only looted and killed but also converted to the Islamic religion by the secular progeny of humanists drummed about as Islamic sufis. After the territories under the avalanche of the barbarous raiders were cleared by the valiant soldiers of India, prominent Kashmiri pandits like Pt. Kashyap Bando, Pt. Shamboo Nath Ogra, Pt. Sham Lal Shalla alongwith Rameshwari Nehru toured the villages and hamlets where Muslim marauders having planted banners of crescent had effected forcible conversions. The neo-converts despite threats and verbal invectives from the Muslim bigots were re-christened and restored to their birth religion.

The Muslim fundamentalist movement of 1989-variety targeting the Kashmiri Pandits as enemies of Islam and agents of Brahmanical imperialism realised their massive exodus to the Siberia of Indian plains. History has been repeating for them. They were slaughtered and their hefty properties looted, grabbed or destroyed as per the religious ordinances and fatwas that have been relentlessly and immutably in vogue. Buzzing off to safer zones despite heavy losses in terms of life and limb, what satisfied them the most was that they preserved their ideological and religious personality which they had acquired through civilisational processes of growth and flowering and had

not renounced even in the worst times of Muslim holocaust. Yet there are a few thousand of their co-religionists who chose to stay back for their own reasons despite polarisation on communal lines and religious cleansing. Their presence in the valley though confined to the high security zone has been blown out of proportion to authenticate and propagate the dubious theory of Muslim secular sense, tolerant ethos and intellectual acceptance of composite culture. As is buttressed by the authentic reports their numbers are believed not to exceed a bare two thousand. But the vested interests in cohorts with unscrupulous elements in the corridors of central government inflated their figures to a whopping twenty thousand only to secularise the troubled times and to establish that the Pandits' perception of deadly threat from the Muslim majority was only a ploy to be in self-exile.

The Kashmiri pandits who have chosen to stay back as subservient to Muslim identity and majoritarianism are to all intents and purposes hostages to the Muslim majority and have been victims to Muslim fundamentalist terror attacks and orgies of carnage. The fate of Sohan Lal Braroo, his wife and his innocent daughter has blackened the countenance of Muslim rationality and exposed the Muslim pretensions of allegiance to Sufi Islam and caused shivers in the corridors of Geneva, the seat of Human Rights Commission. T.N.Bhat who had stayed back and was a poor guy eking out existence from the scarce earnings from a few temples. The inhuman terrorists earning tremendous favours and sympathies from the Muslim masses robbed him of his earnings at the Shrine of Zeshta Devi, tied him to a three wheeler, wounding him brutally and fatally and hurled him in an unconscious state into the Dal Lake for final burial. But the humiliating disability and torture that they have been subjected to is the forcible conversion to Islam and adoption of Muslim dress codes, language nuances and other outer appearances that stand out a Muslim.

The Report of a team of the Gandhi Peace Foundation which visited Kashmir very recently reveals, "Those Kashmiri Pandits who have stayed back with their families have made adjustments with the overwhelming majority of Muslims. Their women do not wear sari, do not put on a bindi or wear 'dejhur'. They have no outward sign of being married."

Since the volcanic eruption of fundamentalist insurgency till June, 1994 a good number of Kashmiri Pandits and their daughters under duress have been forcibly converted to Islam at the hands of rabid Muslims owing allegiance to multiple armed outfits.⁸² The Pandit girls who were abducted from their house-holds and work - places were forcibly converted and married to Muslims after meting out to them the treatment prescribed for the looted women of Kafirs. In the hateful conversion campaigns the Jammaat-i-Islami has been in the active vanguard and has drawn unstinted and unqualified support from a Muslim fanatic, Qazi Nissar, and some Janata Dal turn-coat politicals with a dubious track-record in politics. The pages of "Kashmiriayat" as the official organ of umat-e-Islami have showered a litany of plaudits and praises on Qazi Nissar impelled by the Islamic concept of Kufra for the initiation and direction of the conversion campaign.⁸³ The hapless victims to the brutality of conversion generally belong to the villages of Anantnag, Pulwama and Tangmarg.

In Tral (District Pulwama) a Pandit family with a teenage daughter clinging to its habitat like a limpet was coerced to accept Islam by the rabid Jammaat activists.⁸⁴ Since its conversion the brutalised family has been shifted from its ancestral house to the house of a Muslim in the same locality. Attempts galore have been made to abduct the teenage girl by the lecherous elements held in high esteem as the saviours of Islam. The Pandit family is under close watch lest it should slip off to the safer zones for retrieval from the atrocity and as is reliably reported has been under lessons of initiation in Islamic precepts and

practices by some rabid Mullahs who have been howling along with dogs since 19/20th January 1990 as generalismos of Islamic army of marauders.

Another Kashmiri pandit girl from Safapora was made off as a prize catch by a Muslim in broad daylight. She was converted under the shadow of a gun and married to her Muslim abductor. The parents of the girl living in absolutely hostile environs meekly protested against the atrocity but were threatened with dire consequences if they did not shut up their traps and maintain stoic silence. The mother of the girl under a terrific shock developed serious ailments and her spouse floated a humiliating application in the dailies for permission from the brutal terrorists to shift his wife to Srinagar for proper medical aid. The family somehow managed to flee to Jammu and thus was able to save another teenage daughter from the similar fate awaiting her.⁸⁵

In Tangmarg a Kashmiri Pandit lady married with children was said to have been lifted and forcibly married to a Muslim who is said to be a driver. Her husband tried to report the abduction to the nearby police station but was threatened with dire consequences by the hostile Muslims in the area. In the same area another girl with Hindu origins was said to have been converted and married to a Muslim under duress.

Again in Tral(District Pulwama) a Kashmiri Pandit girl living with her parents was abducted by the Islamic terrorists who rule the roost despite government claims of normalcy. She was converted to Islam under gun-point and married by a terrorist affiliated to a particular brand of terrorist formation. Another terrorist of a different brand did not take kindly to the marriage and after an incessant chase was able to spot the terrorist and his bride and without mincing words commanded him to hand over the girl to him for marriage. Losing his cool and in utter rage the terrorist pounced on his rival and in the ensuing bloody duel he fell to a bullet. The rival made off with his catch

to the privacy of a den leaving behind no clues for tracing him out.

In the health resort of Pahalgam a Kashmiri Pandit boy possessed of Dutch courage reportedly married a Muslim girl from the same area.⁸⁶ The Muslim terrorists alongwith their Muslim supporters were shell-shocked by such a marriage as it was deemed to score off the history that they were writing in Kashmir. They were dead set after the two lovers for their annihilation. Ultimately after a hunt the couple was traced, abducted and mercilessly beheaded with a blunt axe. Their bodies with severed heads were recovered from a field. How could a space be allowed to those who are deviants from the grammar of Islam?

Scores of Sikh girls have been abducted and brutally converted to the Islamic religion. The abduction and subsequent conversion of Satinder Kour D/o Bhupender Singh R/o Khawaja Bagh, Barmulla and Surinder Kour D/o Dalip Singh R/o Alucha Bagh, Srinagar have been splashed in the media. Appeals to the Sikh separatist leader Simranjit Singh Mann who had informed the valley sikhs that he had ensured their safety through a pact with the Kashmiri terrorists failed to secure their release from the clutches of the Islamic crusaders. The Sikh organisations of varied hues from the Punjab have also issued numerous appeals for the redemption of the sikh girls but to no avail.⁸⁷ The chief of the Dukhtaran-i-Milat, Aisha Indrabi, has been assiduously working to the nefarious end of realising the conversion of many a Sikh and Pandit girl.⁸⁸

In the villages of Sopore, Tral, Mattan, Anantnag et al the Pandit families that have been atrociously converted to Islam are allowed to retain the pictures of Hindu gods and goddesses only to mislead the anti-terrorist operators and maintain the effectiveness of the den.⁸⁹

Som Deva reports, "Since the eruption of the fundamentalist insurgency till June, 1994 nearly a hundred Pandit and many Sikh girls have suffered this fate at the hands of

Jamaat-i-Islami and Its armed outfit Hizbul Mujahideen. Later on they were married to Muslim boys.”

He continues, “ In July, 1993 two Pandit girls at the historic village Omanagri (Anantnag) and another one at Safapore were forcibly converted to Islam by Jammaat activists. The attempts by their families which subsequently migrated to Jammu to seek the help of official agencies for retrieving their daughters evoked no response.”⁹⁰

14 KASHMIRI PANDITS AND COMMUNIST BETRAYAL

Despite shattering disintegration of Soviet state, there is no denying the fact that the Russian Revolution with the Marxist thought and ideology as its driving force was a momentous event with international impact and ramifications. The system as ushered in Soviet Russia divergent from and in sharp contradiction to the capitalist system with neck-break competition as its cardinal principle generated a new wave of optimism and blazed a futuristic hope for redemption from an exploitative imperialist yoke. The capitalist countries with booties from their colonies doling out lots of comforts even to the working classes suffered a shock when Marxian thought shot up in public estimation and came to be seen potentially viable to replace the decadent capitalist order. The communist parties in developed and developing countries gained amazing popularity and what was of tremendous significance was the magnetic attraction that the thinkers, theoreticians and scholars felt for the Marxist ideology and soviet experimentation in a system different from capitalist path.

The communist party of India owing its genesis to the impact of Russian Revolution functioned under the Soviet patronage and came to be seen as the propaganda machine of the Russians and their projected strategies. As India had been groaning and writhing under the ruthless British blood - sucking, the Indian National Congress had already spearheaded a struggle for liberation from the British hegemony and the communist party of India with its feeble

political base had no option but to append itself to the congress on the assumption that the anti-imperialist struggle had to be strengthened and fortified by the broad mobilisation of patriotic forces. The communist party failed to take deep roots in India for the fact that it had no feel and appreciation of the enormous heritage of India and that was how its evaluation and perception of the Indian reality never harmonised and had no compatibility with the depths and psychology of India, more than most with its leviathan of culture and civilisation. The same theme-song of "proletarian Revolution" and "class struggle" with hatred as its cosmic principle were plucked out of the Marxian Book to shape the Indian reality for a revolution and crude attempts were harnessed to explicate the shaping processes of Indian history in the light of Marxist tenets distilling ersatz of the Indian substance anomalous to its tone and temper.

With the specific objective of expanding the base of communist ideology, a branch of communist party was also established in Kashmir under the leadership of Dr. N.N. Raina, who was the rallying point for all shades of communists and progressives. In Kashmir, the communist party had a negligible base and drew its support and sustenance mainly from Kashmiri Pandit intellectuals who had a strong tradition of education enabling them to measure new ideological trends and waves shaping out on international arena. The potent and only factor that impeded and nearly stifled the steady growth of communist ideology in Kashmir was the hide-bound Muslim mind indoctrinated and deeply steeped in "Kufra" and "narrowness of the spirit" shaping out into an absolute abhorrence to everything that is not Islamic. As the communists in India had set a precedent, the Kashmiri Pandit communists also functioned as a pressure group within National Conference, which had the same ideological goals and moorings as that of the Muslim Conference. The pre-1947 and post-1947 history of National Conference testifies to the fact of pur-

suing an anti-Kashmiri Pandit thrust and agenda with the same overt and covert communal vigour as that of the Reading Room Party which finally incarnated into the Muslim Conference.

Sheikh Abdullah in his psychological dynamics had no love lost for Kashmiri Pandits but found their efficacy in thwarting the dominant role of Jammu Muslims whom he feared for their advancement in the field of education and also their articulation of politics through the clarity of language. The stark reality of Muslim backwardness coupled with parochialism had amply dawned on him at the Muslim conference convention at Jammu where the whole show was stolen by the Jammu Muslims. Though the Pandits had been the butts of his cynical malign and open hatred, yet he craftily used them to invest his anti-Maharaja campaign with a veneer of secularism and liberal political content. His superficial cries for Hindu-Muslim unity not flowing from his ideological moorings and convictions and his deep roots in the Aligrah Muslim University culture duped Nehru and the advanced sections from the Pandit Community. With the Sheikh's ascendancy in power the Pandits found him as no harbinger of the dividends of peace and amity and social solidarity and cohesion.

Much in the line of Ahmadiyas and Ahrars, the Muslim communists from Lahore and elsewhere descended upon Kashmir to add vigour to the communist ideology by roping in and forming contacts with the leaders of National Conference. The study circles where they flaunted their learning of the Marxist texts and the tactical line pursued by the Communist Party were largely attended by the Kashmiri Pandit converts to Marxism. As the Muslim League with its agenda of Pakistan as the destiny of Muslims had emerged on the political scene of India, communally besmeared Ideological content was provided to the National Conference to fight out the Maharja as representing the decadent feudal system, but not a word was said about the Muslim League as representing the same feudal

and parochial interests. The strategy and socio-political framings as chalked out by the Muslim communists from the Punjab for political action was not the people of Jammu and Kashmir versus British Imperialism but the people of Kashmir versus Maharaja Hari Singh. Fazal Illahi Qurban and Abdullah Safdar pursued the same strategy in Kashmir with trappings of fixation as they felt satisfied that the ends of revolution were better served by pitting the Muslims against the Hindu Maharja in particular and Hindus in general.

Of immense political significance was the arrival of B.P.L. Bedi and his European wife, Freda Bedi in Kashmir. They as communists from the Punjab pioneered a new communist Manifesto for Kashmir in the form of New Kashmir document, a pious statement of Marxist cliches, supposed to concretise the goals that were sought to be achieved through the force of a struggle against the Maharaja. The role of two prominent Kashmiri Pandit communists Dr. N.N. Raina and late Moti Lal Misri was highly laudable in drafting the document, but was diluted and never recognised for their Hindu credentials by the National Conference which was principally a Muslim organisation preserving and battling for the Muslim interests at the expense of other ethnic and religious groups. The document of New Kashmir apparently egalitarian with an accent on minority rights was supposed to pave way for and establish a rational democratic order and with that end in view the communists organised and held study circles to acquaint the lumpens with the social and political content of the document and to their dismay the Sheikh swooped on them, de-legitimised them, got the study circles stopped on the plea that they were propagating communism among the Muslim youth though the fact was that the Muslims by and large detested and shunned communism for its atheistic approach and premise.

The Kashmiri Pandit communists glued to the pursuit of guidelines issued out by party bosses deft in doling out

cliches and off-ground phantasies were absolutely lacking in Hindu lore and orientation and passed for extreme liberals which trait of theirs was mis-understood, never swallowed and appreciated by orthodox Muslims mired in illiteracy and obscurantism. Liberalism as a cornerstone of Hinduism flaunted in an extremely backward society propped upon the tenets of bigotry encouraged an elusive mutual concourse weakening the resisting barriers that could have saved the Pandits from the Muslim onslaught. The rapport that developed thick and fast in the wake of Nehru's intervention dizzied the Muslims from an oblivion into an identity which till then was a missing quantum. The Pandit communists and many Pandits in National Conference without any commitment to the community, thus rootless, surrendered the will of the community to the Muslim majority and also through their closer inter-face with Muslims appeared to have contributed to the growth of pernicious trends which compromised and diluted the Hindu position of Pandits. As borne out by history, Hindus have perpetually been the butts of Muslim onslaught and this fact of history was completely overlooked as nought and much to the chagrin of general Hindu opinion, such onslaughts and any piquant situation of communal dimension were brushed off in ambivalent and lack-lustre fashion and positions were taken as could be characterised capitulatory and uncouth defences were put up for the Muslim demeanour that has been absurd and irrational.

The Hindu communists bright people by all standards got a life-time shock, when few Muslim communists subscribing to the 'instinctive tilt of Muslim psyche for Pakistan' theory denounced them as reactionary Brahmans and anti-Muslim and made a concerted bid to capture the Communist Party though the Pandits as a matter of fact formed a bulk of its membership. They were beaten and thrashed, moneys on them snatched and looted, humiliated and put to crass contumely. The Muslim communists and hired goons in a joint operation looted and captured the Party.

run Book-shop at Lal Chowk, Srinagar and they say that the whole operation was the brain-child of Mohiuddin Qarra, the oriole of Kashmir, in accompaniment with Pir Abdul Ahad, who in post-1947 scenario in his disgruntlement with Sheikh Abdullah broke away from National Conference and without any contrition formed Political conference with pro-Pakistan politics as its pivotal agenda. As expected the communist Party suffered a dip and a split on communal lines and dismaying as it is, the Pandit communists alert as they should have been failed to learn from the brash communalisation of communist politics and continued with their unflinching loyalty to National Conference which their party bosses had regimented them to believe that Kashmir with its so-called radical programmes would lead to a communist revolution in India with waves flowing in from Red China.

Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, a signatory to the National Demand, had the grace and independence to lodge a pealing protest against Sheikh Abdullah's utterances against the religion of Hindus and raised the issue in the working committee of National Conference and offered his resignation when the Sheikh unexpectedly thundered that he was first a Muslim and last a Muslim. The National Conference would have sundered apart had not Pandit Nehru intervened for a patch-up to save the ship from sinking. But the pandit communists as per their history in Kashmir have maintained stony silence on issues of vital concern to the community though the fact was that they were taken for Kashmiri Pandits and if the tag came off, it was firmly suck back and when the state power moved against the Pandits wholehog, they were not left out for special treatment or even consideration and were mandalised and discriminated and met out a raw deal the same wise as the mass of Kashmiri Pandits were.

Pandit Jia Lal Taimiri, a veteran politician without a blemish, cultured and soft-spoken was highly detested for the eye he had on scams and kitties of N.C.Ministers.

Nothing deterred him from setting a brilliant and inimitable precedent when he openly confronted and opposed Sheikh Abdullah for the appointment of Mohammad Sultan at the expense of P.N. Ganju on religious grounds and considerations. A Gandhian to the core, Taimiri failed to digest the injustice and staged a dharna at the National Conference Headquarters demanding the withdrawal of unjust orders by the Sheikh who as a doyen of secularism and nationalism lost no time in axing and weeding out Pandits thus paving way for ethnic cleansing. Not emulating the example of Taimiri the Pandit communists not only maintained intriguing silence, but also formed a part of National Conference gendarmerie in the execution of a policy of blatant communalism by the State with Sheikh Abdullah telling the Pandit young men though competent and qualified to go to greener pastures available for them in rest of India. The minorities were put on the hit-list of the government, were harassed and tyrannised and driven into dire straits. Had the Pandit communists followed to the dot the Taimiri precedent, it would never have been in conflict with the Marxist dicta and doctrine.

The Pandit Communists and also the Pandits drawn into the dragnet of National Conference after dissolving their parent body might not have been conversant with persecutionary history of how the Muslim intolerants with their prejudices subjected them to a pogrom which had no semblance of a human face, how a genocide was triggered off to transmute the religious complexion of Kashmir and how the Hindus had been forced to march out of their native abode five times to say the least. The dispensation incarnated from the forces with a fanatic and sectarian visage could not on a sudden vie with catholicity of outlook and secular demeanour. How was it that the loot of 1931 and again the loot of 1932 were totally ignored and blotted out of focus? How was it that the dismal and gory drama of 1947 with all the ingredients of a crusade was painted rosy despite its murkiness?

The Pandit Communists following the behests of the Communist Party of India played a vigorous role in laying bare Sheikh Abdullah's hobnobbing with the Americans who have been deeply aware of the strategic importance of Kashmir in the Himalayan water-shed and hence a focus of their not too benign attention. In their unstinted support to the new dispensation led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, the Communists created the fronts and fortified the forces to put up an ideological battle against the instrumentalities of destabilisation and national insecurity. Kashmir as an official organ of the Communists in Kashmir published editorials and lead-articles that highlighted and put forth a reasonable analysis of the game-plan of Imperialist powers to wrest Kashmir from the Constitutional organisation of India to establish its independence as a requirement of cold war politics of Dullesian vintage. Over the years with changes taking place in Kashmir politics the Communist Party in keen earnestness to craft its politics to the needs of the scenario back-tracked from the Central Committee resolution on Sheikh Abdullah who in all clarity of language was accused of having fallen into the Imperialist dragnet. Jyoti Basu as the Chief Minister of West Bengal in his address to an audience at College of Education, Srinagar declared that the dismissal of the Sheikh's government in 1953 was illegal and unwarranted forgetting that he was a party to the whole contents of the resolution as a Central Committee member. It was an act of opportunism and Communists are essentially opportunists pursuing the same politics of the art of possible for a toe-hold here and a foot-hold there through a flaunt of phoney and artificial slogans to perpetuate their rule in some burrows.

Sheikh Abdullah with a deep streak of vengeance and vindictiveness in his personality was in no mood to forgive the Pandit Communists for their so-called betrayal in 1953. But aware of their political fertility and acumen as Pandits, he invited a brilliant thinker of the stature of late Moti Lal

Misri to participate in the people's Convention hastily organised as a political gimmick to smoothen his highway for a somersault ensuring his ascendancy to the seat of power and also to dole out fake and false impression that he was convinced of the absurdity of the Plebiscite Front politics of which he was the pioneer and innovator too. Despite opposition from many quarters the Sheikh was hastily and even impolitically under a quaint arrangement installed as the leader of Congress Legislature party and in the wake of quirks and heaves of history he entrenched himself as the elected Chief Minister of the State and the weapon used was to feign illness to invoke public sympathy. And dismaying as it is, he launched a diatribe against the Pandits by labelling them as 'Fifth Column', a Muslim calumny and canard motivated by his antipathy towards the Pandit Communists formulating his distasteful role in the formulaic phrase of 'unconscious votary of imperialism'.

Flaunting the credentials of a progressive, G.M. Sadiq maintained a close rapport with the Pandit Communists whom he used at will as a support-plank to foment and perpetuate his self-promotion and self-aggrandisement in pre-1953 and post -1953 political scenario. With no mass appeal, but still wielding political power under all dispensations, he as a matter of first choice dictated by religious culture embarked upon an antediluvian policy-path of formalising the wanton discrimination against the Pandits by the issuance of a satanic government decree purporting religion-based quotas in recruitment and admissions to the study programmes. Superseding the orders brazenly and clandestinely issued and implemented, the said-order practically reserving the whole pie for the Muslims proved the first convoluted exercise in generating Islamic paranoia about the Pandits who as the branded enemies of Islam had to be expelled to the Siberia of the Indian plains.

Writes Koul, "The order proved a land-mark in the history of discrimination and relentless elimination of the Kashmirian Hindus. Violative of the Constitutional provi-

sions, the orders were outrageously communal making religion as a determining factor for entry into services and admissions in professional colleges. What was shocking that such orders were issued at the behest of G.M. Sadiq who had pretensions to secular and progressive credentials.¹⁰¹

Harkrishen Singh Surjeet once known as an Akali Communist and now as a dubious power broker has been overseeing the functioning of his Party unit in Kashmir and directing its affairs prior to the split of the Communist Party and continued with the over-lordship even after the Party floundered into groups and sub-groups. His Jaunts between Delhi and Kashmir undertaken with the objective of proliferating and strengthening the base of C.P.I(M) unit in Kashmir and his successes and failures in this behalf are within the knowledge of people interested in political affairs. As is common knowledge, his sphere of activities in Kashmir has been limited to a house in Khanyar, Srinagar, which is owned by Yusuf Zargar, a Muslim activist, but a comrade in Communist parlance. It was at the same house situated within the tangle of narrow lanes and byelanes of the locality that Comrade Surjeet dilating on the political scenario of Kashmir was said to have expressed his lurking doubts about the relevance and efficacy of Art. 370 and was said to have advocated its repeal. The meeting though not largely attended was suddenly wound up when hundreds of Muslims lying in wait surrounded the house and lapidated it and let loose a barrage of abuse and curse against the owner of the house and filthily denounced Surjeet, his Party and the atheistic philosophy of Marx in so loud tones as to rend the sky.

The Scene was set for manhandling the Comrades. But, before Comrade Surjeet could be bashed and thrashed in the native Muslim fashion, his partymen, pale and panting, led him out of the house through the back-yard door merging into the labyrinthine of lanes and drains to the

house of a Kashmiri Pandit, late J.L.Dhar, not a comrade, where he cooled his heels and felt safe and secure and reassured. Invested with an exceptional capacity of mind and intelligence, Surjeet should have promptly measured the trend of ominous events shaping in the secular skies of Kashmir and despairing as it is he without touching the hornet's nest maintained wooden silence and thought it highly prudent and sagacious not to broach the subject with the powers that be then at the Central capital and perhaps fearing loss of face concealed the incident fraught with nefarious designs of ominous proportions even from his own party circles to which he was responsible if responsibility is a principle informing the Communist politics. The Muslims who had surrounded the house as the venue of Communist activists and had virtually bayed for their blood were the same fanatic brigands churned out from the Madrasas functioning as the seminaries of fanaticism and bigotry and upholding the agenda of converting the valley into a haven of Islam through its annexation with Pakistan.

Aware as every cawing crow is of the fact that Kashmiri Pandits as a distinctive religious minority have been expelled from their native birth-place lock, stock and barrel by the armed Muslim killers earning not covert but overt support and collaboration from large sections of Muslim majority, but comrade Surjeet set on the trail of faceless opportunism refuses to identify and cognise the stark reality and call a spade a spade. If he does, the apple-cart of hollow secularism as conceived and practised in the country will turn turtle and that is why he and his party as votaries of the same phoney secularism have not deemed it politically necessary and expedient to issue out a single statement on the cruel expulsion of the entire Hindu minority from the Muslim Kashmir. He can be unflinching in his support to the creation of Mallapuram, a citadel of Islamic Sevak Sangh, but he cannot afford pay even lip-service to the cause of the three lakh Hindu refugees wallowing in

dust and dirt lest it should taint his secular image which in fact is nothing more than a mask to conceal his anti-Hindu motivations.

Writes R.Venugopal, "How many of them (Communists) remember that in the mid-forties EMS led processions of Muslims in Kerala along with the late A.K.Gopalan shouting 'Pakistan Zindabad' and 'Moplistan Zindabad'. A few will know now how he got the revered Gandhian, Kaliappan, arrested for trying to re-build a temple just because the Muslims objected to it. It was he who distorted the Mopla rebellion in 1921 into an agriculturists' fight against landowners.

EMS had the honour of equating communism with anti-Hinduism which was taken up by all other leftists and so called progressives of our country."¹⁰²

15 HOMELAND DEMAND RAISED

The terrorist violence launched through violence and carnage has been ravaging the State of Jammu and Kashmir without any visible let up as the culmination of secessionist movement pursued with resilience since 1947. Despite all campaigns of canard and disinformation inside and outside the country the world opinion is now thoroughly convinced that the terrorism in Kashmir in its fundamental motivations and inputs is a Muslim crusade and that is how Kashmiri pandits as the first victims have been hounded out of their ancestral abode and hurled into a crisis situation of exodus and exile. Beset with pangs of destabilisation and agonies of stupendous losses of assets and human life the entire community is on cross-roads and stands absolutely brutalised and disfigured, alienated and isolated. It is disrobed of its characteristic identity as an ethnic and religious minority and is equally bereft of its culture personality and existence rooted in the history and culture of Kashmir. The community as a debris of shattered illusions is not only sunk in the quagmire of trials and travails but is virtually frozen in time and space. Uprooted from its cultural and civilisational ethos it seems to have lost purpose and direction and can be compared to a rudderless boat adrift on the stormy and perilous waves. It was hunted and hounded and continues to be pounded and bludgeoned. It was on the run all the time and continues to be in the same oppressed state. Engaged in a grim battle for survival it is losing its nerve in face of harsh vagaries of climate, an apathetic populace and extremely cruel and inimical administration. The members of the community that have a

proud record of decent and cultured life despite all manner of persecution and economic squeeze are reduced to penury, want and deprivation.

The greatest tragedy is that they have become exiles in their own country and aliens in their own land. Under the grip of an agonising and frustrating situation the community having no vote-bank clout is deemed as disposable Junk by the governments under the tight leash of unscrupulous and corrupt politicians who have made shameless attempts to conceal the genocide and hush up the plight and woes of the community and tag it with labels and pejoratives as an excuse to leave it in lurch. The absolute hostility of the Muslim government of the state being given, the central governments of varied shades have been classical in their postures of neglect, callousness and apathy unto the community in exile and diaspora.

Kufra as a dominating factor of Muslim mental apparatus anti-Kashmiri Pandit hysteria was generated and whipped up to weld Muslim ranks to realise their externment and exile flaunted as a tangible achievement to cement the cracks in the secessionist movement. What was Hindu has been vengefully erased and dismantled whole hog. Rational argument deemed as inimical to the terrorist-cum-secessionist movement has been crucified to enforce uniformity through violent and ruthless methods. Rhythms of religion have been geared to reinforce and stimulate frightful orgies of strife and disorder, rape and massacre. Untold physical sufferings have been perpetrated on the community and in the name of religion its dignity has been fatally wounded and Nizam-e-Mustafa is held out to the battling ranks of Muslim violents as a new dawn of promise and hope on the debris of hewn flesh of Kashmiri Pandits and spilt blood of their womenfolk and children. To achieve the ends of crusade said to be historically infamous the Kashmiri Pandits as Kafirs have been tortured, hanged, massacred, dismembered, tied with grenades and blasted, lynched and sawed into two halves and

burnt alive into cinders thereby putting into shade the cruel pogroms of tyrants who have been tried and punished for their inhuman crimes under international law.

As a response to the formidable challenges that have plagued and staggered the Kashmiri Pandit community at large the demand for homeland has been voiced and articulated as a cogent and decisive remedy to mitigate the social, political and economic strangulation and existential plight of the community in forced galut and diaspora caused by the Muslim crusaders motivated with the idea-force of revanchism.

It is not for the first time that the homeland demand has been orchestrated and projected as a viable alternative to the subjection that the Kashmiri Pandit community has been reduced to by the Muslim rulers owing allegiance to the Islamic guide-lines not to the democratic and secular constitution of the republic. The Kashmiri Pandits gave currency to and agitated the homeland demand in the wake of murderous and despicable loot of 1931 when they were scathed, looted and murdered by the hateful communal elements in league with British imperialists ensuring a raw deal for them by callous and arbitrary rejection of their reasonable and legitimate demands and concerns. Hard pressed by the communal scenario the Kashmiri Pandits with a discerning mind reiterated the demand for homeland with its echoes in 1890 in which they would feel safe and secure from the brutal Muslim aggression and implacable enemies of civil society holding rights and values in contempt and to ransom through the construction of their own state. In the wake of Bread Movement the demand snow-balled into a new perspective and dimension when the Muslim majority was incited and harnessed to throttle the political right to dissent and protest and stonewall the Kashmiri Pandit mobilisation to champion their economic demands through generation of obscurantist and communal scenario. Now that the community as a whole has been expelled and externed by the forces of militarised

Islam flaunting bigotry and myopic perspectives homeland demand is the apt response that hews close to the cause. As per the situation obtaining homeland demand is neither a dream nor a fall-back option; in reality it is the first choice, an effective political initiative and is to be pursued for hundred years with firm resolve and forceful vigour. Homeland demand is the crystal ball in which KPs are gazing the ruptures and continuities between their past and future.

In the post-independence era that began with Nehru's "tryst with destiny" the Kashmiri Pandits as a matter of policy and communal vengeance were put on the hit-list of the governments of all shades and hues. Blatant communal policies and measures were conceived and executed to sideline them from decision-making bodies and governance structures. Communal quotas were fixed in education to rob them of educational opportunities and attainments. Employment, postings and promotions were communalised to incredible limits. Quality, brilliance and academic affluence were cruelly sacrificed at the altar of quantity, gross mediocrity and academic poverty. The Muslim pre-eminence in all sectors of administrative governance was rapidly achieved through blatant violation and transgression of the legitimate rights and privileges of ethnic and religious groups not subscribing to the faith of Islam. To achieve the sinister objective of undiluted Muslim sway and precedence fraudulent manipulations were effected, irrational measures devised, communal directives issued and sectarian preferences unabashedly flaunted. All norms were violated and normlessness thus created was stuck to as a norm. To cap it all, posh Muslim localities abuzz with glitz and glamour were arbitrarily categorised as backward and stinking slums inhabited by pandits as posh and developed areas to deprive them of a tap or a good paved - lane and other educational benefits. Remorseless and relentless purge of Kashmiri Pandits as the state policy many brilliant sons of the soil seeking jobs and

admissions in government sponsored study programmes on the firm footing of merit and achievements were brazenly conveyed the whisper that they could shift to greener pastures outside Kashmir in India leaving Kashmir to Muslims. This policy-path was blazed by no less a person than Sheikh Abdullah, who was a prisoner of ghettoised mentality.

On the false and misconceived paradigm of backwardness and poverty blatant communalism was practised to ease out contenders with remarkable academic records and achievements. To Islamise the services an unheard of practice was taken a resort to. Two seniority lists on the model of two-nation theory, one for Muslims and the other for Hindus, were prepared and duly recognised and considered for promotions. Not satisfied even with this cruel communal practice leading to the extreme polarisation of the two communities what the rulers did was to destroy records, tamper and manipulate them. Restless to grab all levers of power for a bigger game-plan of secession the Muslim rulers declared as redundant the entrenched principle of upward mobility through normal processes and established channels for the Muslims, and devised and designed all means and methods of artifice, deceit and cunning to destabilise and marginalise the Pandits who as kafirs at war were to be reduced to the hewers of wood and drawers of water. The democratic and secular character of the state apparatus was metamorphosed into an Islamic mould to cater to and foster the Muslim interests. The measure of labelling 90% Muslim population of the valley as backward and poor and 10% population of Kashmiri Pandits, Sikhs, other Hindus even of Dogra origin as creamy layer caused surprise at all levels of Judiciary. A particular justice of the Apex Court was said to have remarked that it would have been better for the state government to declare 10% Hindus also as backward and poor. A backward class organisation with Saif-ud-din Soz as its kingpin was formed to coerce the Kashmiri Pandits not to pester for the imple-

mentation of Supreme Court orders which had quashed all promotions on the absurd rationale of backwardness and poverty.

Since 1947 when the messiahs of responsible government came to power rule of law as pillar of justice was sung out with the last requiem. It was banished for good from the land of Kashmir and shown absolute contempt and derision and was never allowed to prevail with its full sway and sovereignty. As a matter of result a new era of subjection and subjugation, denial and deprivation, fear and insecurity, persecution and oppression began for the Kashmiri Pandits as a minority.¹⁰³

The "New Kashmir Manifesto" as an egalitarian and secular document was maliciously distorted to restructure and reorganise the entire state into a political system which openly betrayed a bias and partiality for the Muslims. The package of concessions and privileges followed by incessant flow of such packages showered on Muslims as a special breed of people have not flowed from the sources in constitution but from the religion that they harboured. Under the guise of communal amity, equality and opening up of opportunities for the under-dogs the governments from time to time in complete disregard of the constitutional principles of right to equality before law and safe-guard against discrimination on religious grounds promoted the cause of Muslims leaving diverse ethnic and religious communities high and dry, neglected and detested.¹⁰⁴

Land reforms implemented with vengefulness against the Kashmiri pandits proved as a prelude to their death and destruction. They were not effected to usher in an egalitarian socio-economic dispensation with the objective of founding a rational, sane and democratic society. As a weapon of destabilisation thousands of Kashmiri Pandits were forced to migrate to various parts of India for a pittance as a result of economic squeeze and denial of rehabilitation opportunities. The National Conference rulers

with ample resources of cunning and fraud figmented the idea of the appeasement of Muslim peasantry especially the richer sections through land reforms so that they felt wooed and enticed, nay bribed, to vote for National Conference in case a plebiscite under a foreign agency was held. The land reforms shabbily implemented with least ideological commitments to the restructuring of the entire politico-economic system on radical lines led to the creation and spawning of a class of Muslim kulaks who have emerged as the bastions of Muslim reaction and secession and as the mainstay of the detestable ideology and politics of Jammaat-i-Islami.¹⁰⁵ In the form of a protracted war waged on the Pandits the said-reforms injected communal venom and virus into the average sections of Muslim peasantry. The 1989 - fundamentalist insurgency has drawn maximum recruits and vigorous support from the Muslim novo-rich of the rural areas who were offered land in a platter without paying a pie.

Conspiracies were hatched at governmental level to dispossess the Hindus of the industries which they had established through the mobilisation of their capital and entrepreneurial resources. The Muslim workers in such industries were provoked for strikes and lock-outs thereby providing a handle to the plotters to interfere for fruitification of their designs. The match factory in Baramulla as an enterprise of a Hindu was grabbed when the Muslim labourers in the factory disrupted the productive processes through strikes and lock-outs at the behest of their Muslim masters. The Woollen Mills in Srinagar again as venture of a Hindu was put to the same orgy of labour trouble, throttling and lock-outs. The owner was coerced to hand over the factory to the government for a trice. The Pandits thick in the silk trade owned many a silk-weaving unit and under the guide-lines of the same conspiracy were ejected out of the industry through generation of communal rivalries, withdrawal of government patronage and starvation of raw-materials.

As a matter of reality all political regimes under the tight leash of fundamentalist Muslims not only stoked and fostered Muslim communalism but pioneered measures and devices to snuff out the Kashmiri Pandit minority. It was subjected to unprecedented black-mail and intimidation. It was not only disenfranchised but its population figures were clandestinely manipulated and consciously suppressed.¹⁰⁶ The constituencies where the community could assert and exercise its unfettered political rights were fragmented and Jerrymandered thereby divesting it of the right to elect a single legislator to reflect its yearnings and aspirations, grouses and grievances.¹⁰⁷ As an essential part of Islamisation campaign the names of six hundred towns and villages rooted in the Hindu stream of culture were slated off through the imposition of unrelated Arabic and Persian names¹⁰⁸. Unable to transcend the narrow confines of Muslim conference politics and sunk in picayune and orthodox views Sheikh Abdullah launched frontal attacks on Pandits as his bete noir in 1978 and 1982 for the fact that he deemed in them a potential impediment to the Islamisation as part of total game-plan of pan-Islamism which he had been feeding and directing since his take-over in 1975. He set the trend for and reinforced the Muslim model of elimination of Pandits when he fascistically commanded his Hindu Minister from Jammu region not to recruit them in state level services and with a view to blotting out the community he mobilised and garnered the campaign for marginalisation of the Pandits from Central services on the twin planks of religion and population ratio and the same campaign was picked up by his minions and proxies who carried it to a logical end.

The Kashmiri Pandits thus disinherited by the Muslim politicals in their land of birth were assaulted and their residential and business premises invariably looted and plundered mostly on days connected with events in the Muslim world especially Pakistan. The religious places of Pandits were the main targets and therefore ravaged and

arsoned. A storm of hatred and vengeance was unleashed against them blaming and holding them responsible for a sell-out of Kashmir to India. The 1986 Muslim aggression on the minority, planned and pre-meditated, marked the tail-end of the total destabilisation campaign and strategy.¹⁰⁹

The protection and safe-guards meant for ethnic and religious minorities as a meaningful practice pursued all over the world has no lessons for the Kashmiri brand of Muslim rulers who sadistically usurped the democratic rights and privileges of the Pandit minority. In India which is broadly wedded to democracy and secularism there is a duly constituted Minority Commission monitoring the rights and grievances of Muslims in particular even though the Muslims in fulfilment of their demand had their chunk of land at the time of partition. But in the state of Jammu and Kashmir where under the facade of secular constitution a Muslim state has been created with fundings from Government of India. There have been no safeguards and protective umbrellas for the minority and what has been astounding that all protections and safeguards have been culled and harnessed to fortify the Muslim interests by throwing secular ideals, democratic values and constitutional tenets to winds. Nor are there any operative channels that could envisage and ensure the full participation of the minority in over-all functioning of the politico-economic system and nation-building activities and processes. The Hindu minorities curiously dubbed as "amaanat"-trust, not valued as citizens with the same democratic rights and guarantees that have been enshrined in the Republican Constitution were squeezed, harassed, intimidated and finally liquidated grabbing not only the political and economic cake to feed the insatiable Muslim dianasaur but also their lands, properties and houses.

After the legal accession of the state to the Indian union was formalised Sheikh Abdullah vigorously and assertively sought for special status on the grounds of Muslim major-

ity character of the state thereby protecting and subserving the Muslim interests of hegemonism and majoritarianism. But the congress leadership under the siege of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru bartered away the vital concerns and interests of minority groups by placing them at the whims and tender mercies of Muslim majority which under no circumstances can ward off the pull of Islamic ethos of persecuting and oppressing the minorities not pinning their faith in Islam. In absence of political and constitutional guarantees with a heightened emphasis on the right to live and live with safety and an effective mechanism for their implementation Kashmiri pandits were pushed out to the peripheries of the political and economic scenario, oppressed and persecuted, bereft and deprived, hounded and hunted.

How wrong was Pt. Prem Nath Bazaz when he in his communication to Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote that the native Pandits should not press for political and constitutional guarantees and safety valves as an effective shield against Muslim aggression and blatant trespass on and into their rights and privileges¹¹⁰. In his response to Pt. Bazaz Nehru with the political sagacity of a Fabian socialist dittoed to the dot what Bazaz had communicated to him apropos political and economic safeguards and guarantees ignoring Muslim cultural model brazen in its contempt of a liberal frame allowing and ensuring the blooming of hundred flowers. Both Nehru and Bazaz despite tremendous signals from the changed political scenario in the wake of 1953-developments could not envision a moment in history when Kashmiri Pandits rooted in their commitments to the national unity, integrity and security would emerge as targets of gun and genade for the Muslim majority for not committing themselves to the consorting with the Muslim majority for the agenda set by Islam heading towards militarisation. Both of them were not perceptive in their historical evaluation of Islam with the result that they anchored their unflinching faith in the view that the

Muslim majority despite the Hinduised Islam would perennially harbour goodwill and accommodation unto the Kashmiri Pandit minority and there would be no distortions and aberrations in the over-all ethos when ephemeral idealism in face of Islamic imperatives would get dimmed and quenched out. That Rule of Law was the frame upon which Justice hangs as the only guarantee against Muslim onslaught would be undermined and given a hamhanded and cosmetic treatment was not visualised by the brightest literatti of the period.

Despite persecution and discrimination Kashmiri Pandits played indisputably a frontal role in modernisation of Kashmir and harnessed their mental and intellectual resources and initiatives to reconstruct the infrastructural foundations for a vibrant democratic order as part of mainstream politics. To dispel the darkness of illiteracy and backwardness as inhibiting factors forestalling any significant social change they invested their honest endeavours and resourceful energies to expand the network of universal education by encompassing the broad sections of Muslim society that had maintained distance from the light of education. Modernity and rationalism were what they disseminated for the establishment of a sane society, dynamic and buoyant comprising of the individuals cast in the mould of higher values adding charm and meaning to human life. Though the Muslim vested interests in tandem with religious lobbies had etched them as Muslim foes on the Muslim mindscape yet they reposed full faith in and were never repugnant to the democratic order and its sanctified institutions supposed to guarantee their maximum participation in the nation-building processes.

But unfortunately the carefully nurtured Muslimisation of total layers of state apparatus leading to the erosion of secular ideals and democratic principles shattered their cherished dream of basic freedoms, fundamental rights, unfettered opportunities for flowering and more than most security of life and assets from all manner of religion in-

spired vandalism and barbarity. They have been betrayed by the Muslims who were thick in the conspiracy that was brewed in the mosques and madrasas for their extermination and are harbouring genuine feelings of hurt, disillusionment and disenchantment. With the inaugural of Muslim terrorism the Kashmiri Pandits were reviled, humiliated, brutalised and slaughtered and to their utter shock and dismay Muslims suffered a total failure in sanity and rationality and were swayed by the waves of bigotry and hatred which emanated from the mushrooming mosques when in a typical boatman's fashion loud drums about the inaugural of insurgency were fiercely beaten threatening the kafirs to quit and vacate the land of Kashmir for an immediate Muslim take-over and consolidation.

The state government under the helmsmanship of Farooq Abdullah, traitorously simulating paralysis as an act of complicity failed to rise to the occasion to meet the challenges posed by the devastating forces of terrorism through flexing the powerful muscles of state power. The Kashmiri Pandits undergoing carnage and horror were first betrayed by his government which abdicated its moral and constitutional obligation to provide security to the victims under siege of Muslims gone berserk and added to their saga of disaster by virtual perishment from the scene. The undeniable fact is that his government was in the warm lap of Muslim conspirators and was fiddling when Rome was burning. The central Government is equally a culprit and cannot divest itself of the fair share of responsibility that it had in the brutalisation and elimination processes that were wreaked on the Kashmiri Pandit minority. The trials and travails of the patriotic community that had assumed menacing proportions since 1975-Accord with Sheikh Abdullah were not monitored and measured and taken as ominous signals pointering to an impending disaster with far-reaching consequences for the national security. To the consternation of nationalistic and patriotic forces the central government with a Muslim Home Minister having lubri-

cated and stained his hands with the blood of Hindu minority in a panic reaction to douse the fires of insurgency absorbed Muslims in droves in Central Government institutions through extra-constitutional channels by flouting and effacing norms and stipulations thereby completing the unholy task of Muslimisation of the valley.

As a cover up operation for the communal and fundamentalist character of the so-called freedom struggle a virile campaign of disinformation was launched against the Kashmiri Pandits not only to malign them but paint them in the blackest hues. The canard that their exodus was touted by Jagmohan, the then Governor of J&K State, was floated, given widest possible currency inside and outside the country to conceal the forced exodus and communal carnage of the Hindu minority. The web of malicious canards as an instant product included the strands that Kashmiri Pandits as artful people had cornered and usurped maximum state and central government jobs which as a source of anger and irritation had impelled the Muslim youth to cross the borders and take to the gun culture and the Pandits through their merit and achievements, cunning and manipulation would usurp all trades, professions, educational institutions and government jobs in Jammu and elsewhere¹¹¹. As a spill-over effect of the villainous campaign the forced-out employees were not suitably adjusted, the scholars of the community who had abandoned portals of their educational institutions under severe terrorist threat were not enrolled in regular colleges in Jammu and elsewhere, the unemployed were denied employment and the professionals belonging to varied fields made to vegetate and lose their acquired skills through dis-use. The strategy was to keep the cross-section of Kashmiri Pandit refugee population in panic, stress and on tenter-hooks lest they should organise and consolidate their numbers for a political act of demolishing and dismantling the decadent and moribund political culture of the country immured to drown and annihilate the patriotic

people for the appeasement and pampering of Muslim rebels against national integrity and solidarity.

In galut and diaspora the Kashmiri Pandits in a bird's eye view of themselves and their chequered history of persecution and massacre have come to realise the prime importance of asserting their political rights to a homeland in Kashmir where they will be free to conceive and construct a socio-political structure in tune with their cherished goals and lofty ideals with least interference and interruption from Muslim schizophrenia, backwardness and parochialism. The active political opinion that has emerged out of protracted deliberations, debates and polemics was crytallised in the Homeland Resolution adopted by Panun Kashmir in the Margdarshan convention held in December, 1991.

The Homeland Resolution Interlalia demands:-

- a) The establishment of a homeland for the Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir valley comprising the regions of the valley to the east and north of river Jhelum.
- b) That the constitution of India be made applicable in letter and spirit in this "Homeland" in order to ensure right to life, liberty, freedom of expression and faith, equality and rule of law.
- c) That the homeland be placed under Central administration with a Union Territory status so that it evolves its own economic and political infrastructure.
- d) That all the seven lakh Kashmiri Hindus which include those who have been driven out of Kashmir in the past and yearn to return to their homeland and those who were forced to leave on account of the terrorist violence in Kashmir be settled in the homeland on equitable basis with dignity and honour.

Kashmiri Pandits through the concept and content of Homeland Resolution underscored the crying realities that they have been deprived of a homeland and their genera-

tions are facing a precarious and perilous future and the double-edged sword of Islamic communalism and diaspora has exposed their community to degenerating experiences of deprivation, insecurity, depression and estrangement. The historic Resolution clinically analyses their prevailing position of insignificance and non-entity to which they have been reduced and are bartered as sacrificial goats and disposable commodity and more than most are on cross-roads and have ceased to be the citizens of their own state and the country as they have lost the protective shield of fundamental rights and other constitutional guarantees which virtually sustained them through the post-independence era of denial, discrimination, subjugation and blatant religious persecution. The 1989-exodus grave in nature and formidable in scale has shaken them to roots as it was a re-enactment of their tryst with Muslim ferocity and bigotry in contemporary Kashmir which political managers claim to be a part and parcel of India wedded to democracy and governed by a sovereign constitution.

The political scenario in Kashmir has undergone a sea-change by the replacement of normal political culture even though tainted by unhealthy Muslim domination and precedence by a new breed of Muslim terrorists who are avowedly for the elimination and decimation of the Kashmiri Pandit minority through the ushering in of Islamic socio-political structures envisaging imposition of Jazia (poll-tax) and disenfranchisement as its well-defined stipulations for the non-Muslim minorities. Terrorism has not only led to their exodus from their birth-land but has also diminished and nearly sealed their chances for a safe return to their native homes which have been brutally destructed and disfigured through acts of abysmal vandalism. A minuscule minority scattered all over the valley where their cultural presence too has been effaced out does not see any cogency and logic in living the same fashion in their scattered clusters as they lived prior to their exodus and that is how they are face to face with a grim reality and cannot like os-

triches go on pinning faith in the shattered myths of secularism and coexistence. The only star that they gaze at is a homeland where they can unify and galvanise into a force of resistance against the terrorist onslaught and brutalities.

Catholic and modernistic in outlook, upwardly mobile and defiant of communal curbs, Kashmiri Pandits refuse to live in a socio-political dispensation, which has been the creation of politicians who are self-servers and in face of their political failures they wield the stick of Islam and to upgrade their popularity graph they resort to rabble-rousing for plebiscite and myth of autonomy and swayed by whims of vacillation and dreams of sultanate they spurt out venomous sputum against Kashmiri Pandits and back in the seat of power they initiate subversion and swear allegiance to the forces of insurgency and in honest confessions they nonchalantly spill the beans that they had dispatched National Conference activists across the borders for arms training and strategic guidance.¹¹² The Kashmiri Pandits abhor and detest the socio-political order dominated by such dishonest and dubious politicians who are deft and artful in double-speak and hypocrisy and can stoop to abysmal depths of moral eclipse in diverting the Muslim frenzy against the minority by blaming them for the ills they are responsible for and for the failures in nation-building processes they have pooh-poohed and never viewed from angles positive. Kashmiri Pandits refuse to chain themselves to a system which is alienated and isolated from the currents and cross-currents in the country through building of political barriers to cater to their needs of bigotry, parochialism and religious schism. They uphold and subscribe to a world - view and work-culture which do not cage and stifle their faculties and creative impulses in the strait-jacket of cosmic hatred and obscurantism and are votaries of healthy and wholesome trajectory of growth and development for stupendous successes and glittering attainments. Nizam-e-Mustafa projected as the Islamic destination as replacement of the sovereignty of Indian Constitu-

tion is an anathema to Kashmiri Pandits who are wedded to liberalism, fairness, equity and egalitarian societal structures and feel, therefore, forced to carve out a niche for themselves.

The Kashmiri Pandits refuse to tether themselves to a system which is wallowing in the shades of medieval darkness and is shamelessly devoted to the Muslim communal interests and in the process bares its fangs of bigotry and communalism and as a part of Muslim conspiracy suddenly collapses to a heap of mangled material under the weight of propaganda shit blurted out by Pakistan and avidly lapped by the Muslims. It is a system which has lost its human face and where wise counsels failed to prevail, harmony and co-existence could not bloom and good-will and tolerance were a far cry.

Kashmiri Pandits as an educated and cultured community and by all parameters poor but civilised section of Kashmiri society have been for a vibrant and democratic society which they helped to take birth and shape out in its broad features and contours through the spread of literacy levels for temper formation and value enhancement. By introducing the Muslims to the language primers and initiating them in 3 R's the Kashmiri Pandits despite religious differences and world-view variations humanised and aculturised them for a new constructive role in world and life drama and equipped them with new cultivated ideas and ingenuities, perceptions and awakened creativities. But tragically the advance that they had registered on their intellectual slates previously not so unclean and medieval for leading an emancipated life on a higher plane of values, surely not Islamic, was reversed and rubbed off by swash-bucklers and dot-busters who dressed their destructive plans under religious garb and religious terminology resulting in their eclipse and death on 19th/20th January 1990. Common sense took an immediate retreat. Rationality developed a tumour. Hallucination was at its high noon. That what was taught to them by their detestable

teachers as nebulous appeared shaping into the form of reasonable credibility. New hopes even though dim and amorphous made them frenetically feverish and hysterical. With loss of discretion "Azadi" and "annexation with Pakistan" started twinkling like twinkling stars and what was worse they lent their vociferous support to the barbarous acts and ignominious lechery which startled if not the world but the Pandits on the scene. It was a culture shock to Pandits who failed to reconcile to the enveloping darkness and marched out to establish their own claims and rights to an El dorado in the valley which they have lovingly nomenclatured as 'homeland' stipulated to be free and liberal in theme and concept excluding those myopics, parochials and fanatics responsible for death of reason and crucifixion of an ethos. Azadi-seeking and Pakistan-dreaming Muslims have fortified the Kashmiri Pandit determination and resolve to establish their prior rights to their ancestral homeland which will be a scintillating model of liberalism, democracy, humanism and culture suffused with the vitalising spirit of Indian Constitution.

The Kashmiri Pandits are justifiably apprehensive of the Constitutional changes that are sought to fortify the state against the currents and cross-currents of the mainstream life of the country. The pre-1953 status of the state in theory and praxis keeps the state outside the purview and pale of the Indian Constitution. The constitutional provisos of the fundamental rights, citizenship rights, jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, Directive Principles of the state policy *et al* were not applicable to the state on the plea that these were not listed in the Instrument of Accession. The incorporation of Art. 370 misnomer as an enabling provision but actually as an article of limitation¹¹³ constitutionally cognised the Muslim character of the state thereby rendering diverse ethnic and religious groups to the status of subjugation and servility in a Muslim state. It is an indisputable fact that Art. 370 has generated and unleashed the negative alchemy for separatism, divisive forces, paro-

chial trends and Muslim majoritarianism and has limited the sovereignty of the Indian constitution thereby facilitating the push-over of the state into the vortex of terrorism and insurgency. The cunning politicals inside and outside the corridors of power have exploited the said-Article to the hilt as an instrument of black-mail to which the central power in the capital has been constantly succumbing through its reiteration of continued support despite it being a weapon of Muslim reaction and fundamentalism. In its basics the Homeland Resolution is bitter in its opposition to the Article 370 which is primarily responsible for the banishment and uprooting of Kashmiri Pandits. The homeland as envisaged by the Pandits will be unflinching in its faithfulness and fealty to the country and its fundamental concerns and will emerge as an oasis of democracy and humanism in the desert of Muslim insurgency and terrorism. It will have full flow of Indian constitution and will not be put to limitations and mutilations, restrictions and trimmings to feed Muslim insularity based on religious bias.

The Homeland Resolution is the product of the failure of the secular experiment in the valley. Despite attempts to camouflage the ground realities in Kashmir the facts speak that Kashmir has degraded into a wild Muslim ghetto, it is being governed by the Muslim terrorists and their cohorts through their writs and fatwas and it is the Islamic law that is enjoying precedence and supremacy and more than most Kashmir has emerged as a theocratic state which is being funded and guarded on its frontiers by Government of India. The people of India who appear to have been manipulated through propaganda engineering have belatedly come to realise the secular experiment meeting its disaster in Kashmir. Even Nehru himself was sceptical about the success of his experiment which had floundered on the Indian plane but was giving it another trial in Kashmir. In his letter to P.N. Bazaz he writes, "The real problem in Kashmir is whether it continues as a secular state as the

rest of India or not. This affects the whole of India because secularism in India also has not got such a firm foundation as I would like it to have. Anything happening in Kashmir will undoubtedly affect the rest of India with its vast Muslim population.¹¹⁴ In such an uncertain and menacing situation when Kashmir is already in the Jaws of Muslim communalists the Kashmiri Pandits have asserted their rights and claims to the homeland in valley wherein democracy and catholicity with thrive and flower for the deviants to emulate. If Melapuram in Kerala was carved out for Muslims to thrive and expand, why can't homeland in Kashmir be carved out for Kashmiri Hindus to thrive and expand? Homeland emerges as an imperative to retain as much of area as is possible with a view to consolidating all humanistic and democratic forces who are willing to settle in it for patriotic considerations and demands. Homeland will emerge as a pocket of stiff resistance, not as a pocket of compromise and acquiescence, against the Muslim frenzy that has been let loose to realise another partition¹¹⁵.

The Homeland Resolution envisages in unequivocal terms that the Kashmiri Pandits with their firm commitments to the doctrine of live and let live and social unity cannot accept to live in a state which is governed by Muslim preceptors openly preaching and propagating intolerance and religious hegemony. As bitter enemies of religious fanaticism and myopic perspectives they abhor the Muslim majoritarianism which fetters freedoms and shackles opportunities for growth and development on religious grounds. They detest that state which is riddled with fanatics and enemy agents at every step of the total structure assigned the role-model of decimating the remnants of the land of learning and wisdom that Kashmir once was long ago. Kashmir is not Kashmir if it is denuded of Kashmiri Pandits who are a vital link between the past and present of Kashmir. The opinion that has been floated by the Muslim vested interests and picked up at many levels that Kashmiri Pandits can be sacrificed and murdered to retain

Kashmir is lacking in political sanity and prudence. Kashmir without Kashmiri Pandits is virtual acceptance of its status as a Muslim state and another partition of the country with a deferred date.

The Home-land Resolution sums up:-

"They (Kashmiri Pandits) have not reacted to Muslim communalism, instead they have faced the rigours of Muslim dominance with the fervent hope that the thrust on universal education and the scientific progress in the state would pave way for the full flow of democratic thought, recognition of human rights, the genuine urges and aspirations of Kashmiri Hindu minorities, religious tolerance, equity and justice. This hope is now shattered. Neither his Muslim brethren in Kashmir nor the Indian Government which swears by secularism came to the rescue of Kashmiri Hindus at the time when they were butchered and hounded out of their homes and hearths, nor at this moment when they have been uprooted and thrown into wilderness to face a life and death struggle for survival. All the constitutional guarantees for the protection of their limb, life, property, their status and dignity have been trampled with impunity..... Kashmiri Pandits have as much right to live in Kashmir as any other religious group". 115

The Kashmiri Pandits faced with the Muslim tyrannical order were neglected and hurled into the backwaters of Kashmir political scenario which fact is conceded by a highly partisan writer like Gautam Navlakha. He writes, "It goes without saying that the absence of a clearcut policy towards non-Muslims is a shortcoming of the political leadership in Kashmir. It has seldom bothered to go beyond the generalities, which only assuage the insecurity felt by Kashmiri Pandits."¹¹⁶

As a result of intensified vilification campaign against Kashmiri pandits and politically sponsored blatant communal aggression launched upon them, a Jewish anthropoligist Isaac Shamoun was obliged to remark :-

“This community is suppressed to the extent that its dignity as human beings is disfigured and its personality debased, making the community its worst enemy. Only such a community deserves to be lifted upto the level of proud and dignified human beings.”¹¹⁷

As a response to the banishment and externment of the entire community the Homeland demand puts, “Because of their equal rights to the land of their birth they stake their claim to be an equal partner to any future deliberations in the process of normalisation and ultimate solution of the problems.”¹¹⁸

16 **SANGRAMPORA MASSACRE**

As evidenced by the Sangrampora carnage it can be justifiably asserted that the naked dance of death and destruction unleashed against the Kashmiri Pandits continues unabated and with impunity. The tall but unbelievable claims made by rulers wielding political power and authority that terrorism ravaging the state has been vanquished and stamped out stand debunked and put to rest. The occurrences of daily encounters and increasing number of killings deflate the sails of propaganda and disinformation spree floated and hyped by the Chief Minister and his chorts. The valley is yet to be retrieved from the brutal clutches of the Muslim terrorists and Doda continues to be reeling under the heels of gun-totting desperadoes and the infiltration of waves of trained and armed terrorists has been stepped up in the border districts of Poonch and Rajouri, thus lending new pitch and volume to the on-going terrorism.

The cold-blooded slaughter of seven Kashmiri pandits inhabiting a tiny but distant hamlet of Sangrampora in the District Badgam by the treacherous Kashmiri-speaking terrorists gone crazy in the chase of Islamic goals sent shock waves into the Kashmiri Pandit refugees in distress and diaspora. The crime that they had committed was that they had not joined the ranks of fleeing refugees to escape the Muslim brutalities and had chosen to stay back in a hostile society firmly glued to the Islamic agenda. Yet they were put to a grisly carnage which had frightening range and contours. The Kashmiri pandits in the beginnings of insurgency and mayhem were tortured and killed in ones and two throughout the valley thereby cleansing Kashmir of infidels. But the Sangrampora massacre was a holocaust

that was perpetrated on the Kashmiri Pandits in general and beleaguered Pandits in the valley in particular.

The dastardly and inhuman massacre did not earn full-throated condemnation on part of political¹¹⁹ who act as hostages to their Muslims majoritarian identity based on the cocoon of insularity and deliberately refuse to perceive beyond the eyelids of its set parameters. Under the motivations of Islamic fundamentalism the mortgaged mentality of the Muslim political assumes extremely hostile and inimical postures unto the religious minorities which is manifested through a relentless campaign of calumny and vilification against them. Tolerance as an accepted canon has ceased to be and secularism necessitating even-handed treatment of diverse religious groups is rejected thereby stabilizing the parochial politics with communal under-pinnings. Shackled by such thinking and attitudinal changes, cliches and compulsive words of sympathy were doled out with some insincere references to composite culture and beaten-out secularism. There are Kashmiri pandits perhaps a siezable section among them who firmly hold on to the view that they cannot and should not expect a fair deal from the political dispensation that has come to power. The same dispensation betrayed them at the critical juncture of 1989- exodus and the same formation is at the helm when the Sangrampora massacre was perpetrated with all its brutal savagery. The prejudices, outmoded notions and malafide pulls remain and have not been dispensed with for smoothening of relations between the majority and the minority for the achievement of desirable goals of economic development and strengthening of democratic apparatus.

Despite tall claims of normalcy, the Sangrampora massacre establishes beyond any shadow of doubt that the terrorists have not been marginalised and are still calling shots and Kashmiri pandits who still dot some localities and hamlets are not let off the hook and remain targets for killing besides canards and disinformation to meet the strategic goals and political imperatives. The savagery that was let loose on the beleaguered Pandits incontrovertibly lays bare the Muslim motivations of liquidating and ethnically

cleansing the left-over elements of the religious enemies who have a saga of persecution and harassment to relate. In fact, the Sangrampora massacre is the culmination of the entire process of exclusion, decimation and ethnic cleansing which had started way back in 1947 under the dubious cover of socio-economic reconstruction and regeneration. The security of Kashmiri Pandits in the valley in the totally Islamised social, political and economic order cannot be ensured and guaranteed as the very presence of Pandits is deemed to dismantle the Islamic state that is under the shaping out processes.

The hopeless Pandits, budding and old, were brutally murdered to disperse the message that Kashmir as a Muslim state purged of the vestiges of Hindu Kafirs remains paramount and cannot be compromised with. The trumpet that was beaten about the return of natives was silenced through the gory and macabre killing of persons, who had been left to their fate and fortune and were not provided a protective shield, a fool proof security cover, even though perpetually vulnerable. The desire on part of Pandits to return to their natural abode in Kashmir was smothered and the same had suddenly burgeoned with a government coming to saddle.

With the perpetration of death and destruction on the defenceless targets Muslim killers of the indigenous brand which fact is testified to by the survivors of the victims made good their escape into safe havens and have eluded arrest so far. It can be stated without fear or dither that they succeed to escape the noose only with the connivance and tacit support of the perfidious elements that infest various levels of governance. The staying back Pandits after the mass stampeding of their co-religionists had tied their lot with the Muslim majority, submitted to its tyranny and accepted the status of servility in the hope that they would be spared from the atrocity of being hounded out and thus earn a reprieve. Little did they know that the Muslim terrorists with tremendous support from Pakistan and emboldened by the insensitivities and visceral hatred of the state government unto them were hatching conspiracies and executing game-plans to drown them in a bloody

holocaust through which they proved their high potential to strike at will and exposed the falseness of the much-touted claims of Farooq Abdullah that normalcy though elusive had already dawned and what was needed was to reinforce it with the return of the exiled Pandits. But objectively normalcy is a self-created illusion on part of rulers who refuse to realise that the ground realities are in conflict with their illusory perceptions. The nagging worry obsessing the anti-insurgency operators and their command structures is that war waged by Kashmiri Muslims has yet to exhibit convincing symptoms of diminishing and vanishing levels of abatement.

The Sangrampora massacre has a telling message that the exiled Pandits who are accused as the betrayers of the terrorist movement cannot return to their land of genesis even after the Muslims out of fatigue and frustration decide upon normalising conditions and investing them with a look of stability. It also puts the fate of beleaguered Pandits in the valley in doldrums bringing it amply home to them that they can be gobbled up any time by the Muslim hounds to satiate their ravenous thirst for the much-coveted blood of Kafirs and cannot save their bacon. The two-pronged strategy that was achieved through the gory massacre of Sangrampora was to stone-wall the return of natives and obliterate the last traces of Hindus in Kashmir.¹²⁰

Without probing the entire gamut of the problem in depth and preparing a transparent blue-print some futile and inconsequential shrill yells about the return of displaced Pandits proved a catalyst in the Sangrampora massacre which re-affirmed the implacable hatred of revival of socio-cultural milieu informed of catholicity and resurrection of inter and intra-community trust and goodwill. The very idea of transplantation of Kashmiri Pandits back into their original ambience is deemed as inimical to the Muslim separatist instinct and separatist movement in the larger objective context. As part of a long range strategy the Sangrampora carnage setting new records of mass massacre was enacted not only to reverse but abort the measures though cosmetic and half-hearted to restore them

in their habitations which Muslims have wiped out and decimated. The discourse and agenda-setting Muslim think tank destructive in approach and premis has amply made it known that Bud Shah in any case will neither be re-enacted nor resurrected to fritter away the unprecedented gains to Islam in Kashmir with the cleansing of Hindus and their heretical practices. The deep scars and concussion implanted on the ideological and cultural personality of Kashmir are valued as Islamic gains which at all costs have to be consolidated and entrenched.

More than most the harrowing blood-bath at the distant outpost of Sangrampora has blasted the dubious myth of Muslim tolerance as a vital ingredient of hazily defined Kashmiriyat which has been trumpeted and glorified by Balraj Puri and men of his ilk. It has equally deflated the balloon of a sham that Jagmohan as the State Governor conspired the migration of Kashmiri Pandits and armed conflict, internal strife, violation of human rights and other hateful forms of violence were not the key factors in inspiring their mass exodus. What transports Balraj Puri¹²¹ into rapturous joy is that the All Parties Hurriyat Conference has also condemned the killings at Sangrampora ignoring that the said-organisation as a conglomerate of despicable, murderous and fanatic groups with communal fangs has initiated the doom and destruction of Kashmir in general and Kashmiri Pandits in particular through export of Muslim youth to the camps in POK, Afghanistan and Iran for arms training and indoctrination.

Kashmiri Pandit Protest

On 25th March, 1997 the Kashmiri Pandits in utter shock and anguish converged on the Rajendra Park in Jammu and were vociferous in condemning the mass massacre of innocent Hindus who were presented to the media inside and outside the country as models of defiance.¹²² A procession of twenty-five thousand Kashmiri Pandits protesting against the wanton killings passed peacefully through the city thorough-fares leading to the civil secretariat where as per plans a memorandum was to be presented to the Nero of Kashmir whose father had dreamt of the state as his

personal freedom. The demonstrators who were angry and indignant raised anti-Farooq Abdullah slogans who as per his history in Kashmir has been instrumental in whipping up anti-Pandit hysteria through his frivolous and unsavoury statements and has been Justifiably accused of shirking responsibility for protecting the unarmed patriotic citizens from the terrorist onslaught. They raised anti-ISI and anti-Pakistan slogans as well. The demonstrators led by their sane leaders had to face unprecedented columns of police troops who resisted and thwarted their onward march to the Civil Secretariat. Before negotiations could be concluded between the Hindu community leaders and the police troops the latter pounced on the demonstrators in Nazi style fury and rage perhaps at the behest of Nero himself. All demonstrators, men, women and children, were mercilessly beaten at the Shalimar Crossing and Indira Chowk with lathis and rifle butts. Smoke-shells without number were rained on the demonstrators with the intention to kill them. Some demonstrators, passers-by and scholars returning from schools got trapped inside the Rameshwar Temple. The policemen under the orders of a Muslim Officer gate-crashed into the Temple and kicked, beat & inflicted grievous injuries on the trapped people. More than hundred rounds were fired in air and three hundred smoke-shells hurled on the peaceful demonstrators. One hundred and fifty people including women were fatally wounded and eighty-three of them bore severe head injuries. All the injured demonstrators were admitted to the Emergency ward of the Medical College, Jammu for treatment. Scores of women injured in the brutal police action included Kirti Kalla, Vice-President of ASKPC and Shyama Jee, an activist of Vishwa Hindu Parishad. A young man was shifted to the Medical Institute in Chandigarh in an unconscious and critical state as he was grievously wounded in the head.

The deputy commissioner on duty, an IAS officer, added a new feather to the Farooq Abdullah Government when he in full public view was visibly seen hurling stones and shells on the demonstrating mob of Kashmiri refugees.

On 26th March, 1997 the BJP issued a call for Jammu Bandh to register protest against the police action on peaceful demonstrators in front of Civil Secretariat. The bandh-call was supported by all the Kashmiri Pandit outfits and Jammu Organisations. Roopnagar, Janipur and Tope Sherkhan areas in Jammu emerged as flash-points when bearded policemen and Kashmiri Pandits were seen locking horns in ding-dong battles lasting for hours together. The Muslim employees and their women-folk flanked by police troops provoked the demonstrating Kashmiri Pandits for retaliatory acts. A SRTC bus used for transporting the Muslim employees to the secretariat was said to have been set on fire. There were some violent incidents at Janipur said to be the aftermath of police provocation. The government quarters at Tope Sherkhan were pelted at when Muslim women-folk yelled pro-Azadi and pro-Pakistan slogans. Some shops belonging to the Kashmiri Muslims were put to flames when Muslim police desecrated a Temple. The residences of Kashmiri Pandits were broken into, inmates kicked and beaten with lathis and rifle butts. Scores of Pandits were fatally wounded. A retired KAS officer was not spared either and was left with profusely bleeding wounds. A budding boy was chased to the rooftop where he was caught, given merciless beating and hurled down the roof leaving him with his legs broken. The Kashmiri Pandits, mostly students, who were taken into custody were mercilessly beaten and let off reportedly after paying off huge sums of money.

Condemnation of Police Action on Kashmiri Pandit Refugees

The brutal police action on Kashmiri Pandit protestors was widely condemned by all sections of Indian populace.

The Bharatiya Janta Party state unit strongly condemned the lathi charge, police firing and tear gassing on peaceful demonstrators. In a statement the party vice-president and incharge of Kashmir affairs alleged that instead of solving their pressing problems and redressing their genuine grievances the government in saddle has unleashed a reign of terror against them. He also alleged that the National

Conference Government has totally failed to meet the challenges of militancy and is suppressing the loud voice of nationalist and patriotic forces. Dr. Nirmal Singh, the general secretary of BJP, termed the attack on the heads of processionists as a murderous assault which rebuffed the secular claim of the government in power.

While condemning the police action the All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference warned the government to desist from such brutal assault on the Hindu community members. It also made it known that the militant and anti-national elements have unleashed a reign of terror against the community in the valley by putting innocent community members to bullets and the state government was harnessing all its brute might to silence and stifle the voice of nationalist forces. It also demanded a thorough probe into the police action that was uncalled for and brutal.¹²³

The state Vishwa Hindu Parishad was unequivocal in its condemnation of unprovoked firing, tear-gassing and lathi charge on Kashmiri Hindus by the police. In a statement the working president of the organisation strongly criticised the police for pelting stones on Rameshwar Temple and beating people after chasing them inside the Temple. He demanded a probe into the sacrilegious act of police.¹²⁴

The State Bajrangdal warned the government that it should desist from harassing the patriotic forces and take decisive steps to eliminate the militancy from the valley. It strongly condemned the police action on the peaceful Kashmiri Pandit demonstrators.¹²⁵

The All India Kashmiri Pandit conference condemned the uncalled for and unprovoked police action on the processionists. In a statement the senior Vice-President and Chief Organiser alleged that instead of pacifying the demonstrators the government gave a brutal show of its strength through police action.¹²⁶

The State Durga Vahini expressed grave concern over the police action on peaceful Kashmiri Hindu demonstrators. It demanded a probe into the action.¹²⁷

In a statement the state president of ABVP warned the state administration that the brutal police action against the Kashmiri Pandits will have serious repercussions.¹²⁸

There were scores of statements issued from numerous organizations that have condemned the police action on Kashmiri Pandits who were protesting against the mass massacre of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley by the Muslim terrorists. The organisations included All India Kashmiri Samaj, Kashmiri Fire Sufferers Forum, Youth Wing of Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Non-camp Kashmiri Migrant Manch *et al.*

Farooq Abdullah Thunders

Disturbed by the massive protest of Kashmiri Pandits against the carnage at Sangrampora and wide-spread condemnation of police action on the peaceful demonstrators Farooq Abdullah giving full and unbridled play to his trait of ranting and railing, bluffing and blustering thundered on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, "Kashmir will always be a Muslim state and the status wouldn't be allowed to dilute."¹²⁹ And the National Conference members including the terrorists of yester-years expressed their vigorous approbation of the communally stanced statement of the Chief Minister through loud thumping of desks. The statement having touched their inner chords was said to have been rephrased, "As Kashmir is a Muslim state, it, therefore, cannot form a part of the secular constitutional structure of India."

In his specific reference to the Kashmiri Pandit protests he said, "no one mourns the death of those Muslims who are being killed daily in Kashmir. Whether the blood of Muslims is not red or they are "bekar" who had to be finished. Is the blood of a Muslim cheap?"¹³⁰

Without commenting upon the innards of the statement a BJP legislator, Hans Raj Dogra, asked as to who was spilling the red blood of Muslims. Pat came the reply, 'OUTSIDERS.' "Outsiders" is duplicitous in intent and content, pregnant with double meaning which required to be divined and intuited.

At a function in the Central Hall of legislature the Chief Minister vented out his morbid wrath against the Kashmiri migrants (not displaced persons as per his statement in Bombay) for unleashing disinformation against his plans (which he has none) for their return to the valley. He yelled his lungs out, "I am afraid only of God and not Kashmiri Pandits. I am not going to be scared about their processions and rallies. Farooq Abdullah will do what is the demand of the situation."¹³¹

A man in the gallery was heard whispering, "And demand of the situation is not to dispossess the grabbers and looters of their landed estates and residential houses but to perpetuate the loot, grab and appropriation of their left-behind properties and carry them not to their homes but to transit camps."

Farooq Abdullah sounded very secular with commitments to the restoration and revival of an ethos which virtually is eroded and decimated when he dilated on the imperative of the return of Pandits so that bells at Khir-Bhawani and Hari Parbhat were heard again.

Commenting upon his statement an elderly lawyer with tremendous political history and commitment to secular ideology aptly put "it were better for the Chief Minister to institute a judicial probe into his own contributions to the erosion and decimation of Kashmiri ethos which he feigns to lament and he should answer as to why the bells of Bhairav Nath Temple in Srinagar have remained untolled and unring for the last 30 years despite court directions and verdicts and if Pandits were vital to the Kashmiri ethos, why were they labelled as Kafirs, targeted for rape and massacre and forced to flee the valley?"

Kashmiri Pandits decry the Chief Minister's Statement

The leaders of the Kashmiri Pandit organisations accused the Chief Minister of declaring war on the minorities of the state. Terming his statement in the Legislative Assembly as superfluous and absurd, they made it amply clear that their protests against the lapse of the government leading to the blood-bath at Sangrampora had nothing to do with

the dilution of the Muslim character of the state and what was expected of the Chief Minister was that he should respect and perpetuate the healthy principles that inform and regulate a participatory democracy leaving aside parochial views and devise and execute measures to ameliorate the lot of displaced Pandits. Hitting the nail on the head they termed the brutal slaughter of Kashmiri Pandits as a well-planned conspiracy to eject out the vestiges of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley.¹³²

Kedar Nath Sahni's Statement

The eminent leader of Bhartiya Janata Party and in-charge Jammu and Kashmir affairs Kedar Nath Sahni lashed out at Farooq Abdullah for making irresponsible statements about Jammu and Kashmir thus adding complicacies to an already complex problem and tensions to an already tense political situation. In a vigorous statement at Jammu he expressed his contempt at the communally tinted statement of the chief minister that Jammu and Kashmir will always remain a Muslim majority state. He failed to understand the motivation that impelled him to issue such statements. He made it known that no fewer than ten organisations had complained that there were moves afoot to metamorphose the population complexion of Jammu.¹³³

The BJP leader having made his mark as a sagacious and astute politician spared no words in condemning the brutal lathi charge on Kashmiri refugees and violent incidents at Top Sherkhan government quarters. He saw a big conspiracy behind both the incidents and demanded a judicial probe to unravel it. He castigated the government for its sheer failure in appreciating the psyche and problems of Kashmiri Pandits and described the lathi charge as barbaric and inhuman.

He was astonished to learn about the Deputy Commissioner on duty pelting stones on peaceful demonstrators.

Exposing the canard that the Chief Minister was figmenting and disseminating about the unwillingness of the Kashmiri Pandits to return to their native homes the BJP leader made it explicitly clear that they would return

only after safe and conducive conditions were created through the elimination of terrorist menace ravaging Kashmir. He saw a sinister game-plan in the Sangrampora carnage which was to thwart and pre-empt the return of the natives.¹³⁴

Fresh Exodus

The canard about the normalcy having been restored in Kashmir valley was tattered to shreds when scores of Kashmiri Pandit families that had weathered the terrorist avalanche were forced to flee their native homes and hearths for the woeful life as camp dwellers. The Sangrampora massacre opened a new chapter of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits which commenced in the wake of 1989 killings and warnings to quit.

A number of causes with their cumulative effect can be attributed to the mass killings of Kashmiri Pandits and subsequent wave of fresh exodus from the valley. There are observers who attribute it to the irresponsible and worthless utterances of Farooq Abdullah about the displaced employees losing their jobs and getting scored off the government registers in case they fail to join their duties back in the valley. The hard and stark reality is that the landed properties, houses and even jobs on which they could have joined have been arbitrarily and illegally usurped and grabbed by the Muslims with absolute connivance from the powers that be. There are many others who attribute the massacre and subsequent developments to the rabid frustrations and desperation caused among pro-Pakistan terrorists who stand in a large measure marginalised or eliminated through pro-India operatives. The commoners in general believe that Farooq Abdullah through his vacillatory postures has not been able to put up a stiff resistance to the terrorists who were encouraged and advised to cross borders for arms training by him only. More so, he has been dabbling in frivolous issues like "greater autonomy" and "pre-1953 status" thereby missing the wood for the trees. There is a solid opinion that holds the Government of India responsible for the massacre as it as a matter of policy has been attributing all killings of

Kashmiri Pandits to ISI and Pakistan thereby providing a shield to the local killers who are responsible for the Sangrampora massacre. Farooq Abdullah employed the same tactic when he held foreign mercenaries responsible for the blood-bath.

The Hurriyat Conference leaders, better call them killers, as their hands are sullied with the blood of Hindu Kafirs are not only suspicious of but opposed to the dialogue that India and Pakistan have initiated at secretary level. With a view to frustrating the dialogue the unscrupulous Hurriyat leaders could have master-minded the Sangrampora killings. As a matter of strategy the Hurriyat leaders do not want the dialogue to fructify through the resolution of the entire spectrum of problems that have assumed a wider dimension at the behest of a foreign intruder that has its own geo-political game up its sleeves.¹³⁵

The residents of Sangrampora village even though they were devastated through the mass massacre had no intentions of shifting to Jammu or elsewhere but had decided to stay on despite government neglect and insensitivity. But they could not stay on because of communal tension that was fuelled up and aroused by the communal utterances of the Chief Minister. The Muslim neighbours who had earned praises galore for tolerance and accommodation bluntly fiated them to quit and before they abandoned their natural habitat, they had to face social boycott. The terror that engulfed Sangrampora and adjoining villages led to the exodus of twelve Kashmiri Pandit families residing in Lalgam village in the same district. They have a saga of woes to relate.

RSS Chief's Statement in Jammu

The RSS Chief, Prof. Rajinder Singh, felt sad and shocked at the brutal treatment that was meted out to Kashmiri Hindus languishing and wasting away in tented colonies and other slums. He declared that Kashmiri Hindus were not alone in their bitter struggle against terrorism but the entire nation was behind them. In his address to the RSS cadres he bluntly asked as to how there could be communal harmony in a country where three lakh Hindus were forced

to buzz off their native houses to seek refuge in their own state. He dilated upon the need to full protection and facilities to the migrants who had taken up refugee-like life at Jammu.¹³⁶

Hizb Maligns Sagar

In sharp contradiction to the statement of Farooq Abdullah, Ali Mohammad Sagar, the Minister of State for Home, held Hizbul Mujahideen responsible for the slaughter of Sangrampora Pandits. As per the statement of the Hizbul Mujahideen, the fierce armed Muslim outfit, denied its involvement in the incident and added that "malgning Hizbul Mujahideen in the tragic incident was sheer desperation on part of Sagar. "Sagar attributing the killings to the Hizb was only disseminating lies and his history in politics was that of a hooligan and rabble rouser" the statement added.

The Hizbul Mujahidden statement said that the government and the security agencies have been at cross-purposes making contradictory statements with respect to the involvement of the Muslim militants in the incident. The security agencies laid the blame on the Hizb by making a reference to the wireless message that was intercepted by them. But the army held Lashkar-e-Toiba responsible for the mass massacre and again the foreign militants gunned down in an encounter at Badgam were said to have been involved in the gruesome killings.

Holding the government agencies responsible for the killings, the Hizb statement claimed that it did not believe in killing innocent and unarmed civilians as it was engaged in a holy (unholy) war where there is no place for killing innocents.¹³⁷

Officials Hate Pandits

A five-member team visited Srinagar and Budgam districts to probe into the gruesome massacre of Kashmiri Pandits by the Muslim terrorists battling for secession and total Islamisation of Kashmir. The members of the team in a press conference stated that bureaucratic militancy was the biggest hurdle in the normalisation processes in Kashmir

and the senior officers wielding levers of power not only harboured bitter and despicable feelings against the Kashmiri Pandits but in fact were out to torpedo any attempt by the Government or any section of Kashmiri society to encourage the return of the natives. They could not meet the Deputy Commissioner of Srinagar to know from him about the plight of the staying-back Pandits as he refused to give them an audience. They claimed that National Conference workers though their numbers had considerably depleted were operating in league with militants. They also blamed the government for concealing facts about the security scenario in Kashmir and said that seven Kashmiri Pandits were butchered by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists and not by foreign mercenaries as was being claimed and given out by the government in power.¹³⁸

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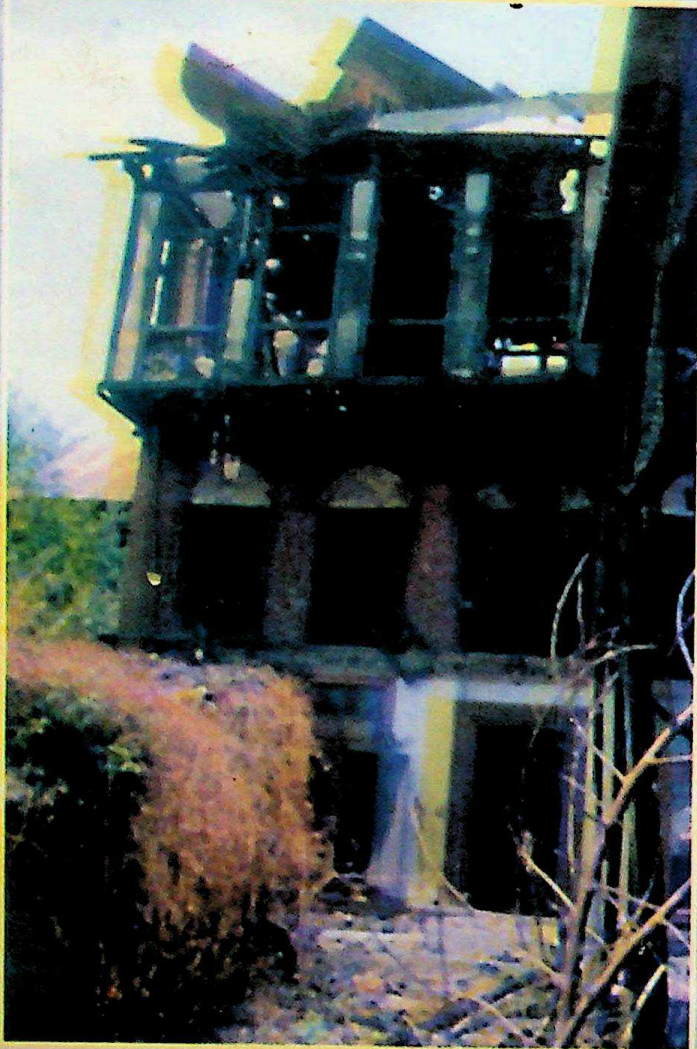
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With a brilliant academic record which includes three post-graduate degrees in English, Hindi, Sanskrit and B.Ed. from the University of Kashmir, Prof. Mohan Lal Koul served various academic colleges of Jammu & Kashmir State. As a student he was affiliated with the left-wing politics and zealously participated in cultural activities organised under the aegis of various cultural fora. He taught Kashmir Shaivism at Benars Hindu University as a visiting professor under U.G.C. scheme. He also acted as an advisor of DAV Institutions in Delhi.

Apart from contributing articles to papers and journals on subjects related to history, culture, aesthetics and philosophy, Prof. Koul has authored a book on Kashmir crisis titled as "Kashmir-Past and present, unravelling the mystique", which has been broadly appreciated for the documentation of facts and features about the fundamentalist developments in Kashmir.

In his brilliant foreword to the book, Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, a scholar- politician, has put, "Shri Koul deserves all commendation for writing a book which helps to illumine many dark corners It is a scholarly and documented work without being ponderous. It is authentic in its composition and unsparing in its presentation of even unpalatable facts."



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